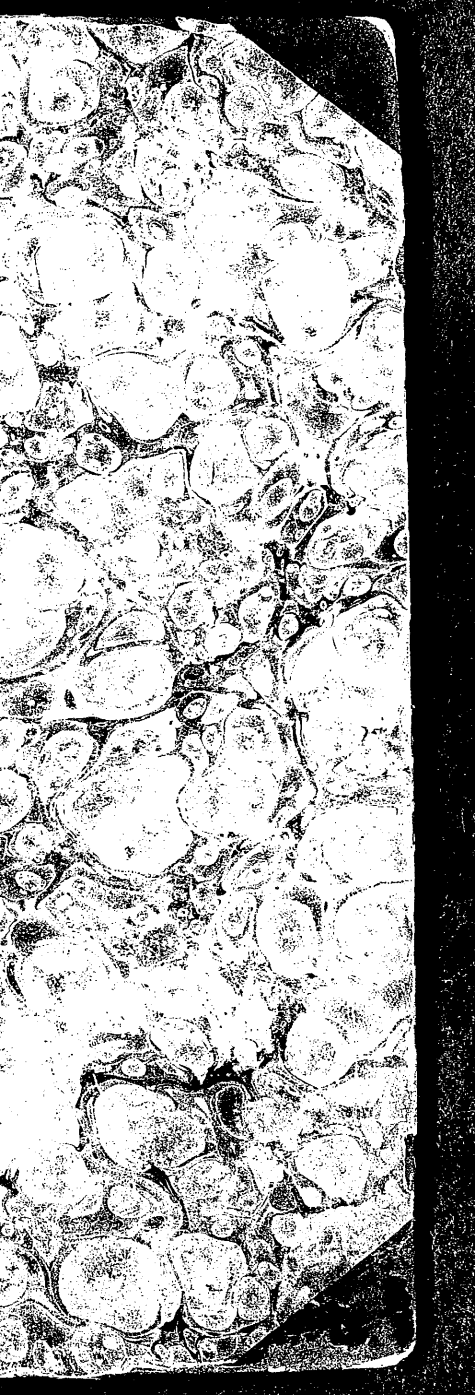
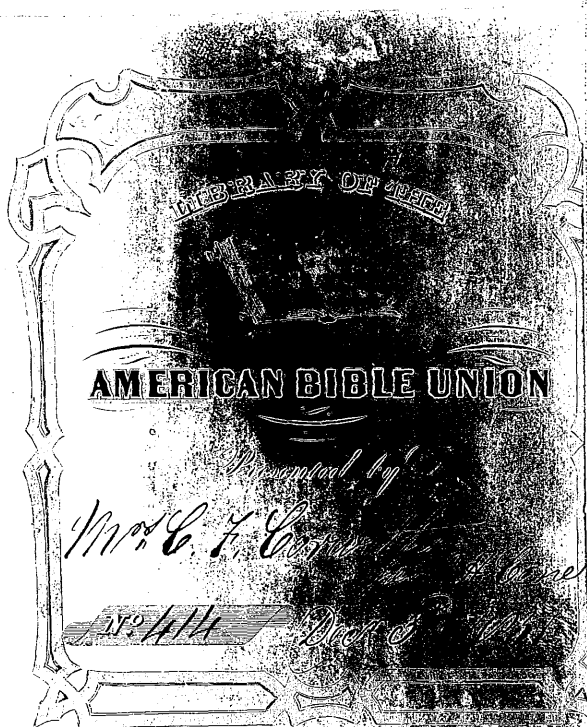






3450



Class

Book

University of Chicago Library

GIVEN BY

CARDS MADE

Genine.

The University of Chicago
Libraries



American Bible Union Collection

LIBRARY OF THE

AMERICAN BIBLE UNION

Presented by

Dr. J. H. ...

1894/4

...

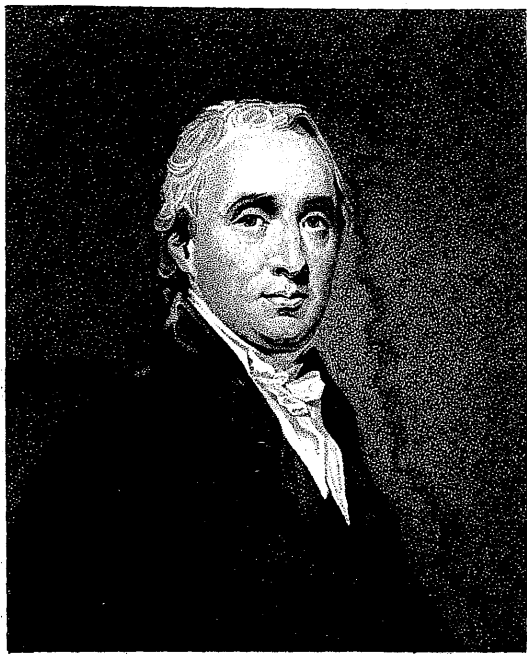
Class

Book

University of Chicago Library

GIVEN BY

American Book Union Collection



Raeburn Pinxit

Fragman Sculptit

HENRY DAVID INGLIS.
Late of Edinburgh.

Engraved for the New Evangelical Magazine.

LETTERS,
SERMONS
AND
TRACTS

ON
VARIOUS IMPORTANT SUBJECTS,

BY THE LATE
HENRY DAVID INGLIS, ESQ.
ADVOCATE,
ONE OF THE PASTORS OF THE BAPTIST CHURCH,
EDINBURGH.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,
AN ACCOUNT OF THE AUTHOR.

EDINBURGH:
PRINTED BY J. RITCHIE:

SOLD BY GUTHRIE & TAIT, J. OGLE, W. WHYTE,
OLIPHANT, WAUGH & INNES, W. BIGGAR, &c. EDINBURGH;
J. & A. DUNCAN, GLASGOW; E. LESSLIE, DUNDEE;
W. JONES & T. HAMILTON, LONDON.

1812.

BX6217
I52

CONTENTS.

	Page
<i>Account of the Author,</i>	v
His Petition to the Magistrates of Edinburgh,	xii
Letter from the Church at Glasgow on his Death,	xxxiv
Letter from Mrs INGLIS,	xxxvii
<i>Two Letters to the Public respecting W. MILLS.</i>	
Letter 1st, containing a Narrative of his Conversion, &c. 7	
Letter 2d, Illustration of the doctrine taught him,	29
Reply to Objections,	72
Hymn sung before his Execution,	100
His last Speech,	101
<i>Letter to six Men under Sentence of Death,</i>	107
<i>Letter containing some Account of J.A. ANDREWS,</i>	115
<i>Letter to the Editors of the Missionary Magazine,</i>	120
<i>Short Notes of Discourses.</i>	
On Isa. liii. 1. "Who hath believed our Report?" &c.	133
Dan. vii. On the Prophecies respecting Christ,	138
Luke ii. 1—21. The Birth of Christ,	143
Luke xxiv. 26. The Sufferings of Christ,	148
Heb. iv. 9, 10. On the Sabbath,	152
Rev. i. 17, 18. "I am he that liveth," &c.	155
<i>The Duty of Subjection to Civil Rulers,</i>	163
<i>The Conversion of the Ethiopian Eunuch,</i>	171
<i>A Call to the People of God to come out of Babylon,</i>	181
<i>Another Sermon on the same Subject,</i>	200
<i>On the Divinity of Christ,</i>	215

	Page
<i>Thanksgiving Sermon on the Peace with France,</i>	232
<i>On the Necessity of Christians holding the beginning of their Confidence stedfast to the end,</i>	239
<i>Strictures on some Papers in the Edin. Evang. Mag.</i>	251
<i>A Word to the Wise and Unwise,</i>	257

Discourses not before Printed.

<i>On the Commission of Christ to his Apostles,</i>	259
<i>On the Salvation of Infants,</i>	268
<i>On the Death and Resurrection of Christ,</i>	276

HYMNS.

<i>The Employment of the Saints on the Lord's Day,</i>	298
<i>The Christian's Request and Hope of Glory,</i>	299
<i>Verses on the above, by a Friend,</i>	ib.

ACCOUNT
OF
THE AUTHOR.

MR INGLIS was the eldest son of LAWRENCE INGLIS, Esq. a gentleman of the profession of the law, who was descended from an ancient family; and by his mother, Mrs RICHMOND GARDINER, he was grandson of the much respected Colonel GARDINER of Bankton *, who married Lady FRANCES ERSKINE, daughter of DAVID fourth Earl of Buchan, and aunt of the present Earl.

He was born 10th July 1757. At an early age, he discovered such vivacity of spirit, and brilliancy of parts, as attracted the notice of his contemporaries, and will no doubt be readily supposed by such as knew him only at a more advanced period of life. His early indication of talents for arranging and combining ideas, discussing with accuracy subjects even of an abstruse nature, and delivering his thoughts with more than ordinary ease, fluency and perspicuity, chiefly induced his father to form

* Col. GARDINER fell in the battle of Prestonpans 1745. His Memoirs by Dr DODDRIDGE are well known.

the resolution of training him for the bar, and as a preparatory course of education he was apprenticed to a writer to the signet.

But before the term of his indenture was expired, and early in the year 1774, it pleased the Most High, of his sovereign mercy, to awaken his mind to a deep consideration regarding his state as a sinner, upon hearing a sermon from his relation, the late Dr ERSKINE of Edinburgh. Mr INGLIS was now brought to a thorough concern about the interests of his immortal soul. His awakened conscience soon found a certain degree of relief and peace in believing the record of God concerning his Son—a peace, however, still liable to much interruption from the perplexing and unhappy tendency of what has been called the popular doctrine. How well he was acquainted with such perplexities, could afterwards trace them to their source, and apply the only antidote, appears from his small tract, “On the necessity of Christians holding the beginning of their confidence stedfast to the end,” which is an extract from a letter written to a friend in the year 1776 *.

Soon after his mind had undergone so great a change, he became earnestly desirous of being a minister of the gospel. It was not very difficult to obtain the consent of his mother, who doated on him with such maternal fondness as could hardly be surpassed; but it was not so easy to bring his father to agree to his relinquishing the line already marked out for him. In a short time, how-

* See page 239.

ever, he also consented ; being unwilling to thwart his son in a matter upon which his mind was so intently set. Perhaps neither parent could resist the impressions of the singular and striking change that had taken place, and which indeed was obvious to all who formerly knew him. Be that as it may, without much serious opposition, the study of the law was given up for the time, and he commenced the study of divinity in the University of Edinburgh. But he was not destined to be a minister of the church of Scotland, or of any other national church ; and consequently, his studies preparatory to his assuming the character of a clergyman, were to be of short duration. The Lord of the harvest had other work for him in a very different situation.

By special means * his mind was opened to just and clear views of the nature of the gospel, and of the kingdom of Christ, as taught by the Lord himself, and by his holy apostles, and clearly laid down and exemplified in the New Testament. The light poured in upon his mind like the flood of day. The glorious gospel in all its bearings opened fully to his view ; as it smiles upon sinners ready to perish—invites the most vile—levels all distinctions among men on the score of merit—and

* MR STUART, then minister of the parish of Crámond, now a physician in Edinburgh, who was at that time about to withdraw from the national church upon principle, was the means of giving the first happy direction to Mr INGLIS's views, which were farther cleared up and consolidated by conversing with him and others. The writings of MESSRS GLAS and SANDEMAN were also useful to him.

reveals a righteousness commensurate to their blackest guilt—a salvation completely wrought out, free and ready for immediate use to the most guilty believing it; and that without any pre-requisites on the part of the sinner. The effects produced by these clear views of divine truth were soon made apparent, and in his future life bore a strong resemblance to what were produced in primitive times.

Faithful to his light, and evidently following wherever it led, he, in the face of every consequence, withdrew at once from the Divinity-hall and the church of Scotland, eagerly longing for a society with which he could be connected formed upon the principles of the kingdom of Christ, and united upon the profession of the one common faith, and subjection to the one Lord and Head of the church.

A society founded upon these principles, as he conceived, Mr INGLIS found among a small body of Christians, known in Scotland as the second class of Independents. Of this society he became a member in the month of January or February 1776; but finding upon further experience and inquiry into the word of God, that their views and practices were defective in some important respects, and particularly regarding Christ's ordinance of baptism, he withdrew from them, and in September 1777 was baptized by Mr ARCHIBALD MACLEAN, and added to the church, of which he and the late Dr ROBERT WALKER, Physician in Edinburgh, were then pastors.

In November 1778, he was married to Miss HELEN EDGAR, third daughter of the late Mr EDGAR, Marchfield. This event he considered as one of the happiest in his life. It proved to them a source of the greatest domestic comfort amidst all their family trials, whether arising from the sickness and death of their children, or from their own personal indisposition. His affectionate regard and unwearied attachment to Mrs INGLIS through her frequent and protracted illness, could only be equalled by the high respect he entertained for her as his faithful friend and counsellor.

In May 1783, their first born, and at that time their only son, a lovely child, was taken from them by death in a manner rather sudden and unexpected. This bereaving stroke was felt most acutely by both parents; but their wounded feelings were soothed and consoled by the pleasing hope, founded on Scriptural grounds, that their beloved child was added to the redeemed company above*, and that they should see him again, no more the feeble infant which he appeared on earth, but a glorified saint, blessed in the presence, and conformed to the image of that gracious Redeemer, now exalted to the throne of glory, who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God." Such clearly appear to have been their feelings and sentiments, from the following inscription engraved on the tomb stone.

* See Mr INGLIS's notes on this subject, pag. 268, &c.

“ To the Memory of a beloved Child, LAWRENCE INGLIS, who was born 7th Oct. 1779, and died 19th May 1783.

“ This humble stone is set up by his afflicted Parents, to mark the place where his body now lies, in hope of its resurrection to eternal life, along with him, who said, “ Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God.” Mark, chapter 10th, verse 14th.”

Mr INGLIS's talents for public speaking were often exercised in the church in the way of exhortation, much to their comfort and edification. But in the year 1783, he felt an earnest desire to preach the gospel in the surrounding towns and villages, and expressed his wish to have the sanction of the brethren. This being communicated to the church by the elders, they unanimously approved of the measure, applauded his zeal and the motives which influenced him to it, and with the utmost cordiality, from previous proof of his qualifications, gave their voice for his being set apart for that purpose, which was accordingly done by solemn prayer.

How assiduously he devoted himself to that important work, may be inferred from the circumstance of his preaching at least twice or thrice every week, and that sometimes in places five or six miles distant from Edinburgh, notwithstanding his daily attendance at the Bill Chamber, where he held the office of depute clerk, and his regular attendance on all the church meetings, whether

on the Lord's day or on the week days. Nine different places are in the recollection of the writer, where he for a considerable time rendered this service of love to the gospel of Christ, and to the souls of men.

About this time also he began to attend the prison, when any criminals were under sentence of death, in order to set before them the word of life. Some of the following tracts will show how he conducted himself on these occasions—what lively and compassionate concern he manifested for the salvation of their immortal souls—with what earnestness he endeavoured to convince them of their sins, not only as transgressors of human laws, but especially as sinners in the sight of God—with what clearness and simplicity he pointed out to them the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world, and directed them to faith in the atonement of Christ as the only and exclusive ground of hope for guilty sinners. And they also show the success with which, in some instances, his labours were blessed, and the joy he felt when he saw the effect of the grace of God in turning sinners from darkness to his marvellous light.

The case of W. MILLS, who was executed in 1785, was a remarkable display of the sovereign power of divine grace. Mr INGLIS was enabled to set the word of God before him in such a simple and convincing manner, as was the means of his conversion, and he soon became aware of the pernicious tendency of the manner in which many professors of religion express themselves about the gospel and the nature of the kingdom of Christ.

It is probable, that the strong views W. MILLS had on these subjects, prevented him from relishing the doctrine of the clergyman, whose turn it was to attend him, and the conversation of some who visited him. This of course raised the prejudices of some of the clergy, and others, against Mr INGLIS, and influence was used, in an underhand way, to prevent him afterwards from having access to the prison. Mr INGLIS published an account of the conversion of W. MILLS, and of the doctrine taught him, that all might judge how groundless those prejudices were which had been excited against him. Amidst many discouragements, he continued his visits to the prison, till the beginning of 1791, when it appears those underhand attempts to prevent his access were successfully resumed. To this prohibition Mr INGLIS could not tamely submit; but with that unconquerable and resolute, yet most becoming inflexibility in the path of duty, which eminently distinguished him, he presented the following petition to the Lord Provost and Magistrates of the city.

EDINBURGH, Jan. 25. 1791.

“ Unto the Right Honourable the Lord Provost, the Honourable Bailies, and Council of the City of Edinburgh, the PETITION of HENRY DAVID INGLIS, Depute Clerk of the Bills, and one of the Pastors of the Baptist Church in that City :

“ HUMBLY SHEWETH,

“ THAT the petitioner has been, for many years, in the constant practice of visiting condemned criminals, with a view to instruct them in the way of salvation :

and although he acknowledges that he has met with many discouragements in that practice, yet he believes there were few persons under sentence of death in this city, for these seven or eight years bypast, whom he has not conversed with.

“ Last winter, on the change of the inner turnkey, there was a demur made about admitting the petitioner into the prison ; but upon applying to the Council Chamber, the sitting Magistrate had no difficulty to grant his request, and at that time called on the jailor Mr Robertson, and desired him to admit him at all times.

“ The petitioner was happy to think that some former groundless prejudices appeared to be at an end, and that the Magistrates of a great and flourishing city were now actuated by those liberal principles of toleration which mark the present æra.

“ Since that time he has obtained, till now, ready access to the prison ; but after having been once admitted to see the unhappy man now under sentence of death, whom he promised at his earnest request soon to see again, he was refused access by the jailors, first upon the pretence of the prisoner being furious and unruly ; and, when that excuse would do no longer, he was plainly told that he could not be admitted ; yet Mr Robertson had been positively desired by a Magistrate to admit the complainer at all times, and which injunction had not then been countermanded in any other way, than by the orders of a clerk in the Council Chamber.

“ The petitioner was thus forced again to have recourse to the Bailies, two of whom, upon hearing him, proposed to consult with the other Magistrates or Council ; and he now understands, that the result of that consultation is, to bar the complainer from having any further access to speak to criminals.

“ The complainer feels himself much moved at this decision ; he considers it as contrary to the rights of mankind, hostile to toleration, and repugnant to the constitution of this free country. He is happy to think that it proceeded *parte inaudita* ; and he hopes that, when the matter is well considered, and ripely advised, a very different judgment will be pronounced.

“ He cannot well conceive what has influenced the present interdict. Something ought to have intervened since the last order in his favours to justify it : what that can be, he knows not, and he imagines will be difficult to make out.

“ The complainer, with all due submission, apprehends, that the Magistrates have in some respects mistaken what is their duty respecting criminals under sentence of death, when they gave the order now brought under their review.

“ When any person is condemned to death by the law of the land, a certain space is now always given him, previous to the execution of the sentence ; during that time he must certainly be deprived of his liberty, and it is the duty of Magistrates to detain him in safe durance in the prison of the burgh. But though a criminal is thus deprived by law of his personal liberty, the complainer knows not upon what principles he is also to be abridged in all that religious liberty which is consistent with his situation. He cannot conceive what right any Magistrates have to dictate to a prisoner what persons he shall converse with about religion, or prevent him from seeing any person whom he chooses in this way, provided they have nothing to apprehend from them on other accounts.

“ If the Magistrates of Edinburgh, or any civil rulers, are to sustain themselves as the judges of sound doc-

trine, and to tolerate or not as they feel themselves disposed, the petitioner would be seriously alarmed ; and indeed he knows not upon what other principles the present decision can be vindicated and explained. Therefore the petitioner humbly intreats the Honourable Council to consider whether this interdict does not proceed upon such principles, as, if fully followed out, would exclude him from preaching within their jurisdiction, and prohibit the citizens of Edinburgh from hearing him ; and if so, upon grounds altogether adverse to the law of toleration, and contrary to the salutary principles established at the Revolution.

“ The complainer once fondly imagined, that, in this happy age and country, religious freedom was well understood and firmly established. He would fain hope yet that he has not been mistaken ; and that he shall not be left to deplore, that in *Paris* he would be allowed that liberty which he in vain solicits in the city where he was born and bred, from *British* and *Protestant* Magistrates.

“ Were the Magistrates of Edinburgh resolved to prohibit all persons from visiting criminals but the clergy of the established church, he would lament the principles influencing this monopoly ; yet personally as an individual, he could not complain : but he is well assured that this is not the case, and never is intended to be so. Private persons as well as clergymen, get ready access to the prison, and what is yet more to be noticed, protestant dissenting teachers of various persuasions. The complainer knows what he affirms to be true ; and that it is not long since a seceding minister publicly officiated on the scaffold. Has he not then reason to complain in his case of an abridgment of that liberty enjoyed by other men, and to which he is equally

entitled as a protestant and a loyal subject, though a dissenter from the established church?

“ The complainer does not wish to blame the Honourable Magistrates of Edinburgh. As civil rulers he is bound to respect and obey them; and he trusts that he never shall be found deficient in his duty to the legal ruling powers. He wishes the blame to rest where it is due; and he has good access to know where it lies in this case: For he is not ignorant of the machinations of the clergy, and of the busy, though underhand, part that they have acted in order to influence his exclusion from the prison.

“ The petitioner understands that sentiments, advanced by him on a late occasion, respecting the freedom of divine grace to sinners, as such, without any thing good about them to recommend them to the favour of God, have influenced this opposition. These principles he has in a late publication (a second edition of which is just now printed) freely spoken out and established from the Holy Scriptures; and he has as yet received no answer from any clergyman, or any person whatever.

“ The doctrine concerning Jesus Christ, as a sufficient Saviour to men of all ranks and characters, leveling every boasted distinction, and proclaiming salvation to him that believes, he considers to be the gospel. This he maintains to be a doctrine according to godliness, and to have the most powerful influence in exciting to the performance of every duty, both to God and man.

“ This is the petitioner's confession of faith; and he apprehends it to be much nearer the confession of the faith of the church of Scotland, than the doctrine of those ministers who have been most active in opposing his getting liberty to speak to criminals. On this sub-

ject he cannot refrain from reminding the civil rulers, that it is their wisdom to avoid clerical influence, and that they ought to take heed that they act not a part as to the gospel in this case, which will lay the foundation of deep regret another day.

“ On the whole, the petitioner leaves this matter with the Honourable Council, and he expects they will give it that grave discussion which the importance of the case surely merits ; for he does maintain it to be a cause in the discussion of which the public is much interested, and which will form a precedent that may be pregnant with future consequences.

“ May it therefore please the Right Honourable Provost, the Honourable Bailies, and Council of the City of Edinburgh, to take this petition into their serious consideration ; to find the petitioner entitled to see and converse with all prisoners under sentence of death, as formerly ; and give their jailors instructions to admit him at all proper times for that purpose.

According to Justice, &c.

HENRY DAV. INGLIS.”

It is presumed, that no one who loves the gospel, and counts all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, can peruse this petition, without recognizing, not only considerable talents, and a noble and manly spirit, but much of that decided and heavenly state of mind, which marked and characterized the faith and hope of the first followers of the Lamb.

In October 1784, Mr INGLIS was by the unanimous voice of the church, chosen to the pastoral

office. As to the reputation in which he was held, and the faithful, useful and engaging manner in which he acquitted himself in the discharge of it, the reader is referred to what will be found in the sequel of this memoir.

From certain considerations, Mr INGLIS was induced to quit his situation in the Bill Chamber, Nov. 1792, and resumed the study of the law, with a view to his following it out as a profession. The knowledge he had acquired in his younger years in the office of an eminent Writer to the Signet, and his duty in the Bill Chamber, obliging him to give constant attendance on the Court of Session, so facilitated his studies, to which he applied with much assiduity, that after going through the usual trials, he was admitted Advocate, 22d Feb. 1794, little more than a year after he quitted the Bill Chamber. His qualifications may be inferred from his subsequent practice at the Bar; nor can it be doubted, that, added to his powers of elocution, and a clear understanding, his inflexible integrity contributed not a little to that success in his profession with which he was favoured in the providence of God. It is generally known, that he was very averse to engage in any cause, about the justice of which in his judgment he was not clear, and that he would not undertake the defence of any which he conceived to be palpably unjust. If at any time he pleaded the cause of a criminal, it was in order that justice should be done to him, but by no means that the guilty should be acquitted, or the wholesome laws of his country evaded.

Mr INGLIS's health began to be affected in the

month of Dec. 1805 or Jan. 1806. But although the first attack was both sudden and severe, yet no very serious apprehensions were then excited, nor for a considerable time after. The medical gentlemen who first attended, were extremely doubtful as to the nature of the disease; and when more were called in, in consequence of his disorder increasing, the same indecision not only remained, but there existed also a difference of opinion regarding the case, which was very perplexing, and occasioned no small anxiety and distress to his friends. It is probable that the impression of this on his mind gave rise to the words which Mr INGLIS uttered on the morning of his departure, "These have been inscrutable complaints, but they have been sore complaints to me—nevertheless the Lord's will be done *."

Although the physicians were not all agreed in opinion as to the nature of the disease, they were unanimous in advising his removal to a house occupied by his family in the country near Musselburgh, as soon as the weather would permit; and thither he and they accordingly went about the beginning of May. Here his disorder continued, and from the 8th of that month increased rapidly. His sufferings indeed were extreme, but the manner in which he bore them, strongly marked the state of his mind; every thing about him indicated such a degree of humble resignation to the divine will, and such Christian meekness, patience and compo-

* The nature of his disease was not discovered till very shortly before his death, when it proved to be an abscess in his lungs.

sure, as was truly edifying and consoling to his friends. In this state he continued till the morning of the 12th of May, when he departed this life at half past 5 o'clock, in the 49th year of his age, an event by which the church of God, and society at large, were deprived of the services, the talents, and the example of a most useful and worthy member of both *.

A brief journal of Mr INGLIS's last days, was written out at the time, and addressed to the writer of this, by a friend who attended him from the time that the situation of the family required it, and his case became alarming as to its issue. It was afterwards inserted, along with other accounts concerning him, in the new series of the Theological Repository for January 1808, published at Liverpool, Vol. 4. pp. 11—19.; an extract from which, containing an account of the occurrence

* From the commencement of his illness the church ceased not to remember him in their prayers. On the Lord's day immediately preceding his death, it was unanimously agreed to meet on the following morning for fasting and prayer on his behalf. They accordingly met at nine o'clock, but just before worship began, a letter was received, intimating his death. The impression made by this affecting intelligence was strikingly visible on every countenance, and both the matter and manner of the prayers of those who were engaged on this solemn occasion, evinced their affectionate attachment to him, and how deeply they felt the loss sustained by his death.

The two elders, Messrs M'LEAN and BRAIDWOOD, and five brethren, engaged successively in prayer. At intervals the 51st Psalm, the 118th and 131st Hymns, and the 46th Psalm to the 6th verse, were sung; and the 2d and 3d chapters of the Revelation, the 3d of Lamentations, the 14th of Hosea, and the 12th of the epistle to the Hebrews, were read.

EDIT.

of the last two days of his life, shall close this part of the narrative.

“ Saturday, May 10.—This night throughout, Mr I. spake a good deal, but his power of speech was so greatly affected, that I lost much of what he said. He seemed to be often engaged in prayer. At one time I heard him, though rather indistinctly, utter these words in the cxixth Psalm,—*Unless thy law had been my delight, I should have perished in mine affliction*;—at another time, I heard him more distinctly say, “ O Lord ! dispel those doubts, and that unbelief so natural to a timid mind, and grant me full confidence in thyself.”

“ Soon after he fell into what had the appearance of an asthmatic fit, and was almost suffocated for want of breath. Notwithstanding the weather was uncommonly cold for the season, with a strong east wind beating upon the windows, I was obliged frequently at his request to open them, in order to alleviate the feeling of instant suffocation. He spat a little blood under the paroxysm of cough,—a circumstance that flattered a hope which was, alas ! soon damped by other appearances. When he had recovered a little, he asked me whether I thought it had been a nervous fit, or a convulsion of death—then added, “ O, for faith to overcome the last enemy.”

“ From this time, he seemed to think his latter end near at hand.—I consider it as impossible that I can ever forget the solemn and impressive manner in which he expressed himself. He spake of his own unworthiness, remarking at the same time, that an apostle of the Lord, could say that he was the chief of sinners ; that in him, the first in rank of that description, Jesus Christ had shown forth a pattern of all long-suffering to them who should hereafter believe, adding as a high ground of

encouragement that it was faithfully declared that "*who-soever believeth in him should never perish,*" and that he had, in the most free and unqualified manner, invited the most miserable, helpless, and worthless of mankind, by such a gracious declaration as the following: "*Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*" He then remarked that he found nothing in or about himself to glory in, or rely upon, as a ground of confidence before God,—that he came to him through the Lord Jesus Christ as the great Mediator, High Priest, and only Saviour, as though he had never come to him before; for I know, added he, that *whosoever cometh unto him, he will in no wise cast out,* and I know that he is able to save to the uttermost, all that come to God through him, seeing *he ever liveth to make intercession.*

"Lord's Day, the 11th.—But, again this morning, early, he lost the power of utterance; knowing, however, that I had written you a short line regarding his situation, he requested a sight of it; and after reading, he took a pencil, which he kept by him, for the purpose of communicating his mind upon paper, when unable to articulate, and wrote the following memorable words in very legible characters; "*I add, that I hold fast the faith of Jesus as all my salvation.*"

"Through this day he spake very little. Two of the Physicians and the Surgeon, Mr GRAY, who usually attended him, came out from Edinburgh. Dr H. who had for some time attended, gave me a pretty plain hint as to the crisis that was then approaching, but the other spake with much reserve *.

* Dr STUART was the physician who was first called in to attend Mr I. and nothing could exceed his anxious vigilance, over the progress of his disease,—the interest he took in his recovery,

“ Mr I. was laid for rest about eleven o’clock at night ; but he soon became restless, for the throes and pangs of death were upon him ; his usual draught had no effect to procure ease or quiet, he seemed to be almost suffocated, and had again the windows opened, but, alas, without effect, “ the painful task was mine to wipe the cold dew, and stay the sinking head.”

“ Monday morning, 12th.—I could not, after the most careful watching, perceive that Mr I. slept any this past night, but I found him frequently praying to his God and Father in Christ, and praying particularly for faith to overcome the last enemy.—Once and again he said to me, “ what will the last struggle be, when this is so dreadful !” But I did not understand this as implying any conflict of mind as to the truth of the gospel, his own personal interest in it, and his eternal happiness and safety through faith in Christ Jesus ; but merely a kind of amazement and dread of what, beyond all that he presently endured, would ensue in the struggle which produces death in the dissolution of the animal frame, and the separation of the immortal spirit from it. Betwixt three and four in the morning, however, he obtained some relief from trouble, and great enlargement of mind ; and what was very observable, he spake not only distinctly, but with a firmness and strength of voice that quite astonished me. I almost thought I heard him preaching, as I was accustomed to hear him in time of health. His theme was the gospel of Christ ; and while expressing his confidence in him, and his hope of full salvation through his all-perfect and finished work, he seemed to be afraid of uttering a

or the tender sympathy and regard he manifested towards him and the family ; but he was this day prevented from meeting with the other medical gentlemen at Musselburgh.

word that could in the most distant manner, derogate from the grace of God. He said, "I have nothing to plead but the worth of the Lamb who was slain; there are thousands and tens of thousands now surrounding the throne, who were as guilty as myself, and I hope soon to join that multitude."

"Rapidly advancing to his latter end, it could not escape my notice, with what energy and exultation he repeated these words: "When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, he said, *It is finished*, and bowed his head, and gave up the ghost;" adding, "Glory to his worthy name, that I have his finished work to trust in;" and, "Lord Jesus receive my spirit, and have mercy on all those that I leave behind me, and grant that we may all one day meet around the throne."

"In the interval which he had of respite from agonizing trouble and threatened suffocation, his reflections turned upon the nature of his disorder. "These," he said, "have been inscrutable complaints, but they have been sore complaints to me, nevertheless the Lord's will be done."

"But almost immediately after uttering these words, finding his end speedily approaching, he desired to see Mrs I. who had laid herself down in an adjoining room; and at the same time requested me to order a chaise to proceed with all possible speed to Edinburgh, to bring you out, as he wished to see you before he died, and also Mr GRAY, assigning as a reason for sending for the latter, that he had promised to send him notice whenever he found an alteration likely to take place. This not only shows that he was then possessed of entire recollection, but is uniform with the whole tenor of his conduct; for of a truth, there was *not with him yea yea, and nay nay*.

“When Mrs INGLIS came into his chamber, he stretched out his hand, and said to her, “My dear, I wish to take farewell of you before I die.”—After speaking to her in the same strain he had done to me, and of which she seemed to feel the effect, not only with that overcoming power which it had upon me, but with a mixture of composure, resignation, and even serenity of mind, which none but an eye-witness can have a just conception of; he desired his children * to be called to his bed-side, when he addressed them, in a most serious and interesting manner, on the importance of the gospel to every creature under heaven, and its immense value to immortal souls. “These,” said he, “are the words of your dying father—without the gospel and the ground of hope which it reveals, what would become of me, or be my situation *now*? I hope soon to be in heaven, but who can tell the misery of those who die in unbelief!” He particularly addressed his son, and charged him to avoid bad company, especially all those who scoff at the word of God, and attempt to turn it, and the religion of Christ, into ridicule.

“He indeed said a great deal more, which I regret hath escaped my memory, from the way in which my mind was then occupied about him. Then looking around upon his daughters, with a look which indicated a desire to address them more particularly, he laid back his head and said, “I am unable to add any more.”

“Almost immediately after the young people retired, a cloud seemed to cover his mind, and looking with a wishful, anxious eye to Mrs I. and me at once, he said, “Oh tell me, do you think I have been deceiving myself in thinking that I have believed the gospel; for

* Four daughters and a son.

have you not seen people die with greater joy than I do." No wonder that the powers of his mind were overpowered, and his affections chilled, when death had nearly taken possession of, and overcome them all. Mrs I. taking him by the hand, immediately answered, " This suggestion is from the great adversary, resist him, my dear, with the sword of the Spirit ;" to which he promptly replied, " I will break it with this—Jesus, in that he hath suffered being tempted, is able also to succour those who are tempted ; and with this, *Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*"

" I cannot avoid here remarking, that on this and all former occasions, there appeared about him a holy fear connected with firm confidence and faith in the Lord Jesus. " While I have," continued he, " all my confidence in the worth of the Lamb who was slain, I can surely say, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, I have had my conversation in the world."

" The moment of his departure was come. He spake to the last. Reclining his head on Mrs I. he said, " I am very ill, and withal very sleepy ;" and almost instantaneously departed, without a groan, and no other struggle but a faint quivering of the lips, about half past five o'clock.

" I reckon myself happy indeed, in having had it in my power to wait upon our kind, unchanging and faithful friend in his last illness ; a sense of whose endearing attention, and sincere affection, since I was eighteen years of age to his last moment, can never be effaced from my mind. He has fallen asleep in Jesus ! let us not mourn as those who have no hope."

The length to which this memoir has already extended, will preclude such a copious delineation of *character* as might answer the reasonable expectations of Mr INGLIS's numerous friends, or convey to others a just idea of his worth, and at same time obtain the legitimate ends of biography ; but in what may be here advanced, care shall be taken that the picture may in no part be overdrawn. To attempt to flatter the dead by extolling his merits beyond reality, would be absurd, and inconsistent with professing to be saved wholly of grace, and entertaining the hope of our robes being washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb.

Biography, where the lives of Christians are treated of, is for the use of the living, to exemplify the Christian life, and the genuine influence of the gospel on the hearts and lives of those who have gone before us—to hold forth such as examples wherein they were exemplary, without exaggeration—to stimulate Christians by such examples, to exertion and diligence—and to arouse the careless and inconsiderate, to due concern in relation to things of essential moment to their present and eternal welfare.

Under these impressions, the writer now attempts to bring forward the subject of this memoir to the view of the reader, as one who was very exemplary, and eminently under the dominion of Christian principle—who saw the glorious nature of the gospel—who felt its salutary influence and effects in a striking point of view—and who gloried in it, and held it fast to the end, *as all his salvation*.

It has been already stated, that at an early pe-

riod of life, his mind was awakened and relieved by the gospel. The change then produced by sovereign mercy was *universal* as to his views, his dispositions and inclinations, his conversation and choice of companions, and in regard to his objects of pursuit. It was also *permanent*. From the earliest period of his conversion to his dying moment, he acted upon this great maxim, "*One thing is needful ;*" and he truly appeared to be like minded with the apostle Paul, who says, " Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith," &c.

No one could be intimately or long acquainted with Mr INGLIS, and remain at a loss to discover what formed the animating principle of his conduct, and the impelling motive to all his actions. In no ambiguous manner did he carry into all his relations and concerns in life, a sense of the great obligations he was under to sovereign mercy, and thus he exhibited the effect and influence of another grand maxim of the religion of Christ, "*Ye are not your own, but are bought with a price.*"

But it may not be improper to specify some of those qualities which marked his character while living, and which still live in the recollection of his friends.

His natural endowments were much adapted to

the sphere in which he moved, whether as a *lawyer*, a *preacher of the gospel*, or a *pastor* of a Christian church. To a sound judgment, a comprehensive mind, a distinct and ready utterance, and a correct taste, there were added considerable powers of thinking and application to study, with a clear and quick conception. Nor less useful in themselves, nor less conspicuous, were those qualities which peculiarly marked the grace of God in him, such as the mildness of his temper, the suavity of his dispositions and the gentleness of his manners—his habits of life, and moderation as to the world, and contentment with his condition in it, however at times diversified—his *sensibility*, and the lively interest he took in the concerns of his brethren and friends, where his interference could be of any use, so that it might be truly said, that he wept with them that wept, and rejoiced with them that rejoiced—his *candour*, impartiality and strict adherence to justice and equity in matters of judgment and discipline in the church. He was so far from respecting the person of the rich, more than that of the poor, that if a leaning to any side was at all discernible, it was to that of the latter; but in fact his judgment of persons was formed upon, and his charity regulated by the maxims of his Lord and Master, “Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you,” and “He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, *he it is that loveth me*,” and by these he judged and tried the spirits of men.

Another prominent feature in Mr INGLIS's cha-

racter was *integrity, openness of heart and sincerity*. Nothing moved his indignation more than dark and underhand proceedings, or what appeared to him approaching towards a spirit of party. He abhorred the appearance of zeal without principle, —of piety without rectitude of mind and unfeigned attachment to the great Redeemer, accompanied with unreserved submission to his laws. The consequence was, that all the energies of his mind were exerted in strenuous opposition to every species of fleshly wisdom, policy or guile, under whatever plausible pretences those might be disguised.

Another trait in his character was great *independency* of mind, and *firmness* of principle. He thought for himself, and steadily followed the convictions of his own mind. At same time, in matters of indifference, or where the authority of God in his word was not concerned, he was not tenacious of his own opinion, and with strict propriety it may be added, that Mr INGLIS as studiously avoided all appearance of the love of pre-eminence and domination in himself, as he was displeased with it in others, and stood equally remote from a dogmatical spirit, and from self-conceit and arrogance, as from that intermeddling, inquisitive, and censorious humour which unhappily too often manifests itself in some professedly religious characters, to their own dishonour, and that of the profession they make.

Mr INGLIS, in his dress and mode of living, conscientiously studied plainness, simplicity and strict economy. Let none, however, imagine that this

proceeded from a desire for singularity, a sordid spirit, or the base love of money, than which nothing could be more remote from his real character, whether viewed in respect of natural disposition, or as the effect of principle. He was of a very generous temper; and this moderation and economy regarding the things of this life, arose from a conviction of the exceeding evil of being unfaithful in the unrighteous mammon, and of wasting in place of improving his talent, and from a conscientious concern that he might have it the more in his power to do good by ministering to the wants of others.

It must not be imagined from what has been stated, that it is intended to exhibit Mr INGLIS as a perfect character, for such never but in one instance appeared in this sinful world, or that it is meant to hold him forth as one over whose character no shade or spot of weakness, moral infirmity or sinful imperfection rested, for that would be in a great measure to lose sight of that precious truth concerning Christ crucified as it suits the chief of sinners, which first afforded relief to his dark and dismayed mind when made to know and feel the terrors of the Lord, and on which, through all his remaining days, and in his departing moments, his hope of salvation was exclusively founded. It is freely granted that he had his failings and imperfections in common with other men, and perhaps some foibles and infirmities, more peculiar in some respects to himself; nevertheless every judicious and candid person who thoroughly knew

him will admit, that even in his faults there was something amiable, because they were chiefly discovered in a scrupulous regard for the maintenance of what he esteemed to be the truth of God in its purity.

In fine, Mr INGLIS, both in public and private life, was an useful and exemplary character. His amiable manners and agreeable converse with his family and friends endeared him to all with whom he was connected, or had intercourse. He was kind and compassionate, generous and sincere, of tried probity, and free from worldly policy and fleshly wisdom. As a *husband*, a *father*, and *master* of a family, he was very exemplary. His engagements and pursuits in public life bespoke the man of principle, and one who walked with God, acting in whatever came before him in the line of duty with uprightness and tender regard to the dictates of conscience. As a *preacher*, he possessed a happy talent for stating the gospel in a very clear and simple manner, pointing out the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ as the alone and exclusive ground of hope for the guilty, and detecting those false views of the nature of faith, which have so frequently perplexed the minds of persons under convictions of sin, and earnestly inquiring what they must do to be saved. His manner of speaking was very forcible, and his addresses to thoughtless sinners were of the most arousing nature. And although he frequently illustrated the various doctrines of the Scriptures, and the duties and privileges of believers, yet the preach-

ing of *the cross of Christ* was his principal theme. As a *Pastor*, his memory will long be held in affectionate remembrance by his brethren. In his labours among them, he exercised great patience, compassion and tenderness in the case of such as erred, and were out of the way, making all due allowance for temptation, infirmity and weakness; while he would not knowingly connive at sin, or suffer a jot or tittle of the truth to be sacrificed to the corrupt inclinations or partial interests of any. His intrepidity, rising with ill-founded opposition, was manly and Christian. And, upon the whole, the influence of the grace of God, amidst acknowledged imperfections, diffused a lustre over his general character, habits and pursuits.

Mr INGLIS was in stature rather under the middle size, of a small and somewhat delicate frame, but very erect and firm in his gait—his hair was black, his complexion dark—his features small and regular, his eye very expressive, his countenance animated, prepossessing, marking every emotion, and the real character of his mind. His portrait, painted by Mr RÆBURN, and the large engraving in mezzotinto taken from it, are esteemed striking likenesses. The small portrait prefixed to this volume, engraved from the same painting by Mr SCOTT of Edinburgh, is approved of by Mr RÆBURN, as a very striking likeness, and exceedingly well executed.

The two following letters are subjoined as bearing, in no inconsiderable degree, on the subject of this memoir. That from the church at Glasgow

expresses not their own sentiments only, but those of all the churches who had the happiness of enjoying Mr INGLIS's occasional labours. The letter from Mrs INGLIS to a near relation, points out some particulars in his private life, which could not come under the observation of others, and tends to illustrate the uniformity and consistency of his character.

“ From the Church of Christ in Glasgow, to their Brethren the Church in Edinburgh.

“ DEAR BRETHREN, BELOVED IN CHRIST,

“ FROM an heartfelt regard to our dearly beloved brother Mr HENRY DAVID INGLIS, and from an earnest desire to sympathize with you under the loss of a Pastor so valuable and beloved; we have agreed to address you on the occasion of his death, as becomes brethren.

“ We recollect his fervent love to the truth of the gospel, and to the institutions of the Lord Jesus Christ; his quick discernment in the things of God, and his aptness to state them with plainness, zeal, and love, for the edification of the church: and we lament your loss. He kept distinctly in your view the simple, pure and unadulterated gospel, (as the apostle Paul says of himself and his fellow labourers), “ Not handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth, commending himself to every man's conscience as in the sight of God.”

“ To his love of the gospel, his attachment to the laws of the Lord Jesus bore a due proportion. With respect to both, he was faithful and courageous in detecting and opposing every false gospel and every practice opposite to the laws of Christ's kingdom.

“ His counsel and guidance in the church’s discipline, and his Christian conversation, exhibiting an eminent degree of brotherly love, condescension and humility, blended with much integrity and godly sincerity, will not fail to be long remembered with gratitude to the Lord of the harvest.

“ At same time we would not forget our own peculiar obligations. His love to us as a church was abundantly manifested by frequent visits, in which he counselled and comforted us as often as he found opportunity *.

“ Considering these, and other eminent traits of the image of Christ in our departed brother, and the loss sustained by you, and ourselves, and the sister societies of every kind, we cannot but “ weep with you weeping.”

“ Still, it is our duty to reflect with gratitude that we are not called to mourn as those who have no hope. In behalf of the deceased, let us recollect the “ Blessedness of the dead who die in the Lord,—who rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” And if we believe, that “ The Lord died and rose again ;” let us hold it fast, that “ Them who sleep in Jesus, God will bring with him ;” that all the saints shall meet again in a much happier condition than they ever experienced here ; to be always present with the Lord, and with each other.

“ In behalf of the churches and the cause of Christ in the world ; let us remember “ The great Shepherd and Bishop of souls ;” who hath “ All power in heaven

* During the vacation of the Court of Session, Mr INGLIS generally visited some of the Churches and Societies in the Country. On these occasions he was received by the brethren every where with the greatest affection, and his preaching in general was attended by large audiences. EDIT.

and in earth ;"—who hath the residue of the Spirit ; —who hath promised, " Lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Let us thank him for such a loan of this servant in the vineyard, who, though he died comparatively young, was old in labours and in usefulness. Let us pray that good fruits of his labours may appear many days hence, to those who have heard him ; and that his example and writings, in which " though dead, he yet speaketh," may redound to the glory of God in the salvation of many. Let us look to him to bless those labourers who remain, and to thrust forth others, and bless their labours in the harvest.

" May we follow the example of our dear departed brother, in " Holding the beginning of the confidence, and the rejoicing of the hope, stedfast unto the end." And each of us be in case at last to say with him, " I have fought the good fight, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give unto me at that day ; and not to me only, but unto all those who love his appearing." May we so imitate him, that we may be the means of filling up the gap which has been made. For this purpose, may the Lord abundantly supply all your and our necessities, according to his glorious riches by Christ Jesus.

" Let us imitate his bold disinterested integrity, in the profession of the gospel, and in the practice of the commandments of Christ. Let us follow his example of love, liberality, humility and condescension, setting the Lord always before us. Let us follow our dear brother, as he followed Christ, in " Despising the shame," for the hope set before us, of being raised up together with our Lord in glory ;

" Where death-divided friends at last,

" Shall meet to part no more."

“ With sentiments of brotherly love and affection;
in name of the Church here ; we are for the truth’s sake,

“ Dear Brethren,

“ Yours in Christ Jesus,

“ JAMES DUNCAN.

“ JAMES WATT.

“ DAVID SMITH.”

*Letter from Mrs Inglis *.*

“ MY DEAR FRIEND,

“ I RECEIVED your letter containing some particulars of what passed during the two or three last days of the life of my beloved friend, and expressing a wish that I would add any thing that occurred either at that time or throughout his illness ; but such was the state of my mind, during the whole period of his distress, which, from its first appearance of being any way alarming, was two short months—I say, such was the state of my mind, agitated between hope and its opposite ; my unwillingness to take the worst view of his case till forced to it, that I was prevented from marking every thing he said, as I would have done, had I believed our separation was so near ; and then the distress I was thrown into at the idea of myself being left, a prospect which, for many years back, both he and I would have thought almost impossible, that, in place of being able to comply with your request, I appear to myself to have been at that time incapable of recollection. However, in general I may add, that his faith was firm, his hope lively, and founded solely on that simple truth which ever was his favourite theme—the atonement of the Son of God, and the Father’s good pleasure in him. In corroboration

* It is proper to mention, that this letter was written without any view to its publication.

of which, I would just mention one particular: while sitting by him one day when he was very ill, I was in my own mind anticipating that sentence which to all appearance he was soon to receive, *Come ye blessed of my Father, &c.* and upon my repeating it in a low voice—when I came to the latter part of it—*I was hungry and ye gave me meat*—he lifted his hand, and as it were pushed from him any claim from that quarter, saying, mention nothing of that kind—my whole hope is in the finished work of my Redeemer.

“ But while I am able to say so little as to what happened at that time, it has occurred to me, that a few of the particulars of his private life, which was in every respect so amiable and exemplary, might be both acceptable and useful. But here, where shall I begin? I believe it sometimes happens, that remarkable public characters lose much of their lustre, while their private life is brought into view; but with him the very reverse was the case. Nor could it be otherwise, while he possessed, in a very eminent degree, a tender conscience, which must and does influence the most private as well as the most public of our actions—and so remarkable was that feature in his character, that often in my own mind, upon observing his conduct, I would apply to him what the apostle says of himself: *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world;* and the whole of that passage he repeated distinctly, and with much emphasis, when he awoke in great distress, about five or six nights before his death. On this subject, it is impossible for me to express myself strong enough to do him justice. This tenderness of conscience extended to all he did and said. I had

many opportunities of witnessing this, and often did his conduct reach conviction to my own mind—while it raised my admiration and esteem. It was known to a proverb, amongst his worldly associates, of whom however he had but few; and in many instances did it stand in the way of his getting forward in the world, (as the phrase is); for no consideration of any advantage or gain could tempt him to keep measures with the world at the expence of conscience. He was not of the world, as said his Divine Master of himself and followers; he did not relish their society—he seemed out of his element when occasionally mixing with them. I have often had occasion to observe this;—yet, from principle, he did not think himself at liberty to exclude himself entirely from the company of the world; and upon this subject he used to say, he saw Jesus Christ himself eating with publicans and sinners, accepting the invitation of a pharisee—countenancing a wedding entertainment. But, upon such occasions he kept himself pure;—he kept his garments clean;—and with much firmness, did he preserve his countenance grave, and full of disapprobation, at any thing like sin—such as hearing the name of God used irreverently. He was certainly very eminent also in humility and condescension to the meanest and poorest of Christ's people. I believe all who knew him will bear testimony to this. All had access to him at all times; and when in the society of a few of his brethren in Christ, he seemed truly in his element—indulging in that cheerful and innocent mirth which was so much his natural temper.

“To the wants and complaints too of the poor of this world, he always gave a ready ear, and truly may it be said of him, that by his death the poor lost a friend. It was a common thing when he went out at

nine in the morning, to see one or two poor women at each side of the door supplicating his assistance, which he seldom denied. And on this subject, I am sure I may safely aver, that his liberality was equal to his means. With respect to the money he gave to the poor, he was most scrupulous indeed ; he would never at any time give away a bad coin, lest, as he would say, it should fall into the hands of some poor person. But on Sabbath morning, he always examined every piece of silver he meant for the collection with the utmost attention. His self-denial kept pace with his liberality, or rather conduced to it ; whether in furniture, clothes or manner of living, he studied moderation in all ; and that, not to lay by for his family ; for to the patrimony left him by his father for behoof of his family, he, to my certain knowledge, never added a sixpence. His self-denial was exercised, therefore, that he might have to give to him that needeth ; and that system of self-denial and moderation he so uniformly persisted in, that, however much I experienced his indulgence and generosity in what regarded health and comfort, beyond that he would not go.

“ His self-denial in preaching the gospel, is well known. His preaching Christ in prison, until the higher powers interposed their authority in refusing him admittance, is a remarkable occurrence. His preaching in barns and bye-places, and in the open fields and public haunts, such as Newhaven, a small field adjoining a public walk or garden. But he was not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, and one circumstance connected with this, I shall never forget : I shall ever remember it with shame and remorse. When talking to him one day of how I felt upon some appearance of that kind, he answered with great firmness, in these strik-

ing and remarkable words of David to Michal, Saul's daughter, *I will yet be more vile than this*. The occasion I have forgotten, the answer I never can. How unworthy a companion I, of such a person! Of his strict attention to, and conscientious fulfilment of his public duty as an Elder of a Church, I need say nothing, it being so well known. No business, no company, did he suffer to interfere with this. If, for instance, any person had promised to call on business before seven, which was the meeting-hour of the church, if they were not punctual, he never would wait, and, in many instances of this kind, gave offence. As to company, many times he refused to go abroad where he thought there was a chance of either being detained from the church meetings, or made too late for them. And in private duty he was equally attentive; for, however numerous at times his avocations were, he always reserved part of his first and last hours, to hold converse with his God. On Sabbath morning, he was very often first up in the house, and after private devotion, when he assembled his family for worship, during the singing of the hymn, especially when the subject was "the resurrection of Christ from the dead," his countenance appeared so heavenly, [as to strike my mind with such a reflection as this—"His heart and soul are already in heaven." On ordinary occasions, his whole walk and conduct displayed such singleness of heart, such simplicity and uprightness, so opposed to the principles, the maxims, and habits of this world, that I often said to myself—truly he is not of this world—nor is he for this world. And I shall just add, what a dear friend of his said to me of him after his death—and that friend had known him inti-

mately for thirty years,—That *of all the men he ever knew, he most nearly resembled his Divine Master.*—
May we follow him, as he also followed Christ !”

T W O
L E T T E R S

TO

The Public,

ILLUSTRATING THE

DOCTRINE OF THE GRACE OF GOD,

AND EXEMPLIFYING IT IN THE

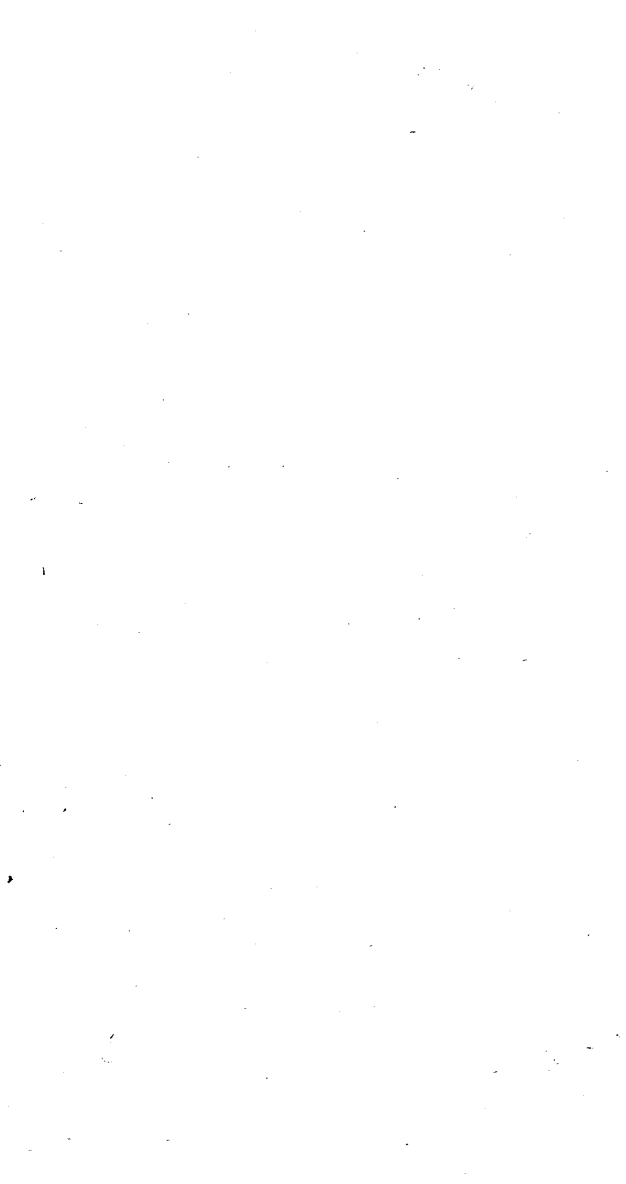
CASE OF WILLIAM MILLS,

A CRIMINAL WHO SUFFERED DEATH AT EDINBURGH,
ON THE 21ST SEPTEMBER 1785.



*By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves;
it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.*

EPH. ii. 8, 9.



P R E F A C E

TO THE

F I R S T E D I T I O N.

As the case of WILLIAM MILLS, who was lately executed, and the sentiments he expressed, have occasioned a good deal of speculation ; and as the doctrine in the faith of which he died, and was encouraged by me and others in maintaining, has been censured by many, and solemnly condemned even from the pulpit ; it has been thought advisable both to give a narrative of that whole affair, and to defend the doctrine of the grace of the Most High against its adversaries. As I was the person alluded to in his last speech, as having been the instrument, in the hand of the Lord, in first gaining his attention to the glad news of peace, and as I have been chiefly marked out as the butt of opposition, this task has been by my friends put upon me ; and I cheerfully undertake it, trusting to that grace, in the defence of which I am engaged, to enable me to state this matter to the conviction and benefit of others.

In the following pages, I strive to illustrate the cry of John Baptist, “ Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken

it^a." And therefore I have addressed these LETTERS, in conformity to the doctrine contained in them, to the high and low, wise and foolish, decent and profane, knowing that it is of the last importance for all sorts of men to consider well on what their hope is founded (if they have any), and to be convinced that there is but one foundation, even the blood of atonement, which can stand in that awful day, when Jesus Christ shall ascend the throne of judgment, and when every lying refuge shall fail, and miserably disappoint those who trust in them^b. May the Lord himself smile on this feeble attempt to vindicate his own cause, and give repentance unto many to the acknowledgement of the truth.

EDINBURGH, 5th Nov. 1785.

^a Isa. xl. 3—6. compared with Matt. iii. 1—10.

^b Isa. xxviii. 16—21. 1 Cor. iii. 11. Heb. ix. 27, 28.

P R E F A C E

TO THE

S E C O N D E D I T I O N .

THE Author of the following Letters, when he published them to the world, neither meant to court applause on the one hand, nor provoke resentment on the other. He could not mean to court applause, by standing forth the advocate of a doctrine which has been hated and opposed by the world in its most respectable forms, while it often, as in the present instance, has been gloried in, by the vilest and most despised of men. Nor could he mean to provoke resentment, by declaring these glad tidings, which respect the best interests of mankind, which proclaim salvation to sinful, wretched, dying creatures, and are thus suited to disarm the hatred of the human heart.

The LETTERS have produced, in a great measure, the effects he expected. He cannot boast that they have been universally relished ; but he hopes, that here and there an obscure individual has learned, by their means, the doctrine of sovereign mercy, and been made joyful in the faith of it ; and if so, he has great reason to be thankful.

*He has heard much of the disapprobation of the clergy, both orthodox and fashionable, and so far as their influence reached, he has been made to feel its weight * ; but none of them have yet thought proper to*

* The Author here alludes to the repeated, though in general unsuccessful attempts, made by some of the ministers of Edinburgh, to prevent his getting access to speak to condemned criminals.

publish their animadversions. They will say, it is not worth their while ; but if it is worth their while to reprobate the doctrine contained in the LETTERS in a more private way, why should it be below them to come publicly forth, and show the world the heresies and errors contained in them ? Surely such a work would not be unbecoming their alleged office and character ; and common justice seems to require, that a person should be so accused, as to have opportunity to defend himself.

*The Author can suppose some things which account for this conduct better than disdain. It is a prudent maxim in the present age, that silence is the best way to quash the progress of unwelcome truth ; and it must be said, in justice to the clergy, (whatever part they acted formerly), that of late they have pretty well adhered to this rule *. And who can tell, but that some of the discerning of that order, may have seen how difficult an enterprise it would prove, effectually to attack the doctrine in the LETTERS, and, at the same time, show decent respect to the doctrinal standards of the national church, which they have subscribed, and solemnly engaged to maintain.*

Be these things as they may, no answer has been made ; and the first Edition of the LETTERS being exhausted, and a considerable demand for them continuing, this second edition has been found necessary. The Author earnestly prays the Great Head of the church, that, in his Almighty hand, it may prove useful in promoting the interests of his kingdom.

EDINBURGH, 7th Jan. 1791.

* In a note to the third Edition, the Reader was requested to attend to the date of this observation.

LETTER I.

MY FRIENDS,

THE most striking example that I ever saw of the grace of God which bringeth salvation, was the case of William Mills, who was lately executed ; and as in him I beheld the primitive confidence, and joyful hope of Christians, so also in this case I have seen exemplified the primitive opposition to the truth. I have long been accustomed to behold with abhorrence a perverted gospel taking place of the simple truth, and have perceived with grief, even as I once expericnced, its baneful influence on the human mind ; but never at any former time have I been more fully convinced of its pernicious tendency, than in the present instance : its power to heal the wounded mind was here proved to be ineffectual, while the glorious gospel of the grace of God shone forth like himself as almighty to cure. In this case has also been manifested a fact which I have long believed, that the difference between the nations professing Christianity, and the ancient Jews, is extremely small, much more consisting in *words* than *things* ; for here we have seen the ancient Pharisaical zeal revived, which often manifested itself in the days of Jesus, against the way in which he showed his favour ; and this poor thief's case has been treated by many much in the same way, as Simon the Pharisee did the case of that polluted woman, who washed the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head ^a.

In this Letter, I mean to give some account of this man from the time I saw him till his death ; and while I state his views, I shall do it principally in his own words, altering or amending only a few modes of expression ; for though he possessed an acute judgment, and good understanding, yet he was a man of no education, and cannot be supposed to have possessed the ability of representing his sentiments at any length, in language uniformly fit for the public eye ; at the same time I must own, that he often displayed the truest eloquence, while his mouth spoke from the abundance of his heart of the riches of sovereign mercy, and some expressions, although singular, and perhaps uncouth to a refined ear, have been retained, because representing with a peculiar energy the sentiments of his mind.

I saw him for the first time, about three weeks before he suffered. I found him in great anxiety of mind about the method of acceptance with God. He informed me that several persons had seen him, and had directed him to be busy with God in order to obtain mercy, enjoining upon him various exercises which had not as yet produced any good effect ; for though he was willing to do any thing, yet he found all his efforts ineffectual to give peace to his troubled mind. I showed him from the word of God, that the work which justifies the ungodly was already finished by Jesus Christ, and that God is well pleased in it, which he fully manifested by raising him from the dead ; and desired him to consider, that it was equally vain and sinful to attempt to perform a work which was perfectly completed by the Son of God, or to endeavour by any efforts of his to appease Jehovah, seeing he is well pleased already in what the Saviour did. I set before him the way in which the guilty are interested in this finished work, by "believing in God who justifies the

ungodly^b;" and particularly illustrated the words of Christ on this momentous subject, "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life^c." I showed him that all men are breakers of the law of God; that he himself, before he was condemned by the laws of men, was under its dreadful curse^d; and, that the all-powerful remedy was suitable to all sorts of sinners, because Jesus Christ came to die for the chief^e. I at the same time pointed out many instances of such obtaining mercy, *viz.* the woman that was a sinner^f, Zaccheus^g, the thief on the cross^h, the Jewsⁱ, the Corinthians^j, the jailor at Philippi^k, and Paul^l.

Even while I yet spoke, his countenance brightened; before I left him, he declared that he could place his confidence in what had been set before him: and the next day I found him happy and joyful, trusting with assured confidence in the finished work of Jesus. But I cannot do better than relate his conversation with two persons who saw him a few days after, as it was taken down in writing by one of them as follows: 'We asked him how he did: he answered; As well as can be expected.—' 'Gentlemen, this is a very lonely place, you see, (and perceiving the end for which we came, he added), and 'I have been in a very sorrowful situation. I have been 'visited by several people, some of whom have pointed 'out a way for me to get to God, by praying to him, 'shedding tears, and using all my endeavours to accept

b Rom. iv. 5.

c John iii. 14, 15.

d Rom iii. 9—24.

Gal. iii. 10.

e 1 Tim. i. 15.

f Luke vii. 37. to the end.

g Luke xix. 1—11.

h Luke xxiii. 39—44.

i Acts ii. 41.

j 1 Cor. vi. 11.

k Acts xvi. 23—35.

l 1 Tim. i. 15, 16.

of Christ, by putting forth the hand of faith to lay hold on him ; and they encouraged me to continue in such exercises, and said that in this way I would find peace with God, and get near to him. And you must know, Gentlemen, that I was very much distressed on account of my sins, and would have done any thing to get relief, and get near to God. I made trial of that way : I did, I believe, as much as any man could do in my circumstances : I prayed with as much earnestness as I could, and cried to God to help me : I tried every means they pointed out, that I might find peace ; but they might as well have desired me to eat this goad of iron, for I still found myself as far as ever from God and his peace. My trouble increased, my distress became unbearable, my very heart boiled with pain, and I could have plucked it out of my bowels (laying his hand on his breast) to have made it better and fitter for God. Gentlemen, (pointing to his bed), I have been tossed there all night, and shed tears, and prayed, and never could get near to God : all was darkness, and had I continued in this way, it would have ended in despair, and the loss of my reason. But it pleased God that a gentleman came to me, and when I told him what I had been doing, and the distress I was in, he told me that I could not get relief in that way, for Christ had finished on the cross that work which was only able to save me ; that God sent his Son into the world to die for sinners ; that whosoever believed this should be saved ; and that I would find peace with God, and only could find it in believing this. He marked out some passages of the Scriptures, and desired me to attend to what the word of God declared, and reject every thing contrary to it. And now I have considered these things, and I find them just as he de-

‘scribed them : I see, *that God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him might not perish, but have everlasting life^m ;* and since I believed this, I am quite changed : I am happy now, I can get near to God now : I can pray to him with pleasure : My heart now is light, for I feel that weight, which I thought would have sunk me down for ever, taken away : every thing is new to me : I pass the night easy ; and indeed I cannot describe the change that I feel. And now, gentlemen, I have told you what has comforted me in my misery, and if you have any thing to say agreeable to this, I shall be glad to hear you ; but I would rather you would be silent than say any thing else.’

Here then we see what was to him the first spring of good hope ; and ever after, his faith and hope in the gospel were more and more confirmed. For he continued all along in the way in which he thus set out, speaking of the truth in the most simple way, in a strain equally remote from self-dependence and enthusiasm, and growing in the most remarkable manner, in the knowledge of the Scriptures, as one evidently taught of God. A remarkable instance of this was communicated to me by a friend. He said, ‘ I was much surprised one day to find him speaking in a pretty distinct way of predestination, supposing that the salvation of sinners was owing to a plan concerted by the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and that it was in consequence of this, that the Son of God came into the world, and gave his life a ransom to redeem his people ; and this was entirely the fruit of his own researches into the word of God.’ Indeed, we scarcely ever went to see him, without hearing him speak

of some precious truth which he had not before perceived ; or of some further instruction he had received immediately from the word of God, concerning the things he already knew, which had a tendency to confirm his faith and hope. He spoke much of the inexhaustible treasure contained in the holy Scriptures, and was amazed to find so much in a book that he had so often read without seeing any thing to attract his attention ; but now he found new beauties in it every day, and said he would never be able to get to the bottom of it. He was also much pleased when he found those whom he considered as believers of the gospel, agreeing with his views. To one of them he said, ‘ When I hear you speak upon ‘ any passage of Scripture, you just express the very ‘ things that have already occurred to myself. I am surprised at this, and can only account for it by believing ‘ that we are taught by the same Spirit.’ To a friend that came often to see him, he said, ‘ I feel myself quite ‘ easy by my firm belief in Jesus Christ : I find I must ‘ leave all to him, for I am no better than a new-born ‘ child, and can help no more towards the peace of my ‘ soul.’ He also particularly expressed to that same person, his admiration of the grace of Christ, who was, when on earth, full of mercy and kindness, and cheerfully succoured all that called upon him ; above all, he expressed the joy of heart he felt at that noted instance of the grace of Jesus, in showing mercy to the thief upon the cross, who but a little before had been reviling him ; and he particularly added, ‘ Now this is a great ‘ help to strengthen my hope, for I know he is a kind, ‘ good, and loving Lord, although he be so great and so ‘ noble as to be the Lord of lords.’ At another time, when he was telling several persons the ground of his hope, one said to him, ‘ If you really believe that, you

‘ will have no cause to fear.’ He answered, ‘ That is
‘ indeed the most extraordinary thing I ever heard in
‘ my life. Do you really suppose that I do not believe?
‘ Would you have me just to drop into hell with my
‘ eyes open, by declaring that I place my confidence in
‘ what I do not believe? This would be a degree of
‘ wickedness far beyond all that ever I have done.’

Speaking of death to a person who visited him, he compared it to a very dark and dismal cloud ; but added, he was sure that Christ the Sun of righteousness shone bright behind it, and that he was not afraid to venture into it, for he knew that he would soon get to the other side, and there he would never see darkness any more. And in a Bible given him by the same person, which he used ever afterwards in prison, he wrote the following sentence on one of the blank leaves : ‘ This Bible has
‘ been my candle when I was in darkness, and I have
‘ found more riches in it than in all the world ; for I
‘ have found peace to my soul when it was weary and
‘ faint, and it has made my chains light unto me : it has
‘ turned a den of thieves into a house of prayer, and
‘ made me happy even in going to death, by defying its
‘ sting.—Written by my hand the day before I died,
‘ *William Mills.*’ And so much comforted was he in the views he had received from the word of God, that he was wont to say, when asked if he wearied for want of company, that he was never alone while he had the truth to comfort him, and that he would be joyful though he was shut up in a dungeon many hundred yards under ground.

He frequently remarked, with admiration and gratitude, the conduct of divine Providence towards him, in preserving his life amidst so many dangers ; ‘ for,’ said he, ‘ if I had died in that situation, I must have drop-

‘ped into hell-fire ; the pit of destruction would have ‘had no covering for me.’ He noticed how many narrow escapes he had made in the field of battle ; and particularly, that once when the British troops were landed in some part of America, under a very hot fire from the enemy, while he was yet in the boat, and lying flat on his face along with the rest to avoid the danger, his knapsack, which was then upon his back, had several balls lodged in it, and his musket was rendered unserviceable by another shot ; upon which he made this remark : ‘ You see how near I was to destruction, but God, in his ‘infinite mercy, was pleased to preserve me, till I should ‘come to this prison, and be made acquainted with his ‘grace ; perhaps too, he meant to preserve the life of ‘another hardened sinner like myself, by so ordering it, ‘that, when I landed, I could not use my gun ; for had ‘it been serviceable, I must have killed some one or ‘other by the first fire.’

As the truth concerning Christ was the sole ground of his confidence, so “ he received it not as the word of man, but the word of the living God.” He took nothing for granted, but examined what any person told him about the religion of Christ by the Holy Scriptures, and received or rejected it by the light of that infallible standard. When visited by strangers, he plainly declared to them the ground of his hope, and knowing the vast importance of holding fast the truth, was very jealous of what was set before him. Some persons approved of his sentiments, but he found many to oppose them, whom he did not spare, but with zeal and affection laboured to convince them of their error.

In this man, we also saw the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ to lead to repentance and godly sorrow for sin. Much has been said and written about repentance,

by those who make the spring of good hope to be remorse for the past, and good resolutions for the future, and thus take away the true source of repentance, as well as the ground of hope to sinners ; but no repentance deserves the name, which does not spring from faith in the atonement of Christ, as the sole foundation of hope to the guilty, and love to him as the Saviour. We have in Luke, chap. vii. ver. 36. &c. in the case of the woman that came to Jesus, a remarkable instance of genuine repentance, as influenced by the sense of much forgiveness, and love, and esteem of him through whom it flowed. And indeed, in William Mills, I may safely say that I saw a case exceedingly similar ; for as he was a great sinner, and needed much forgiveness, so he showed deep remorse, and much fervent love to the Saviour. He spoke often in very strong terms of his former wickedness and rebellion against God, during the whole course of his life, always regretting that his sins should have been the cause of the sufferings of the Son of God. He saw that his evil actions proceeded from the impure fountain of a desperately wicked and deceitful heart, and he traced up all his impurity and pollution to its original source, to his connection with Adam, by whom " sin entered into the world, and death by sin ;" and deeply thus impressed with a sense of his depravity, he used often with admiration to speak of the mighty power of God, who had, by the word of truth made effectual by the operation of his Spirit, turned his stubborn heart from the power of Satan unto himself. Often have I seen his tears profusely flow, when speaking of his sins, and the love of Jesus ; and indeed he never could read the case just mentioned, of the woman who bathed the feet of Jesus with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, without the greatest emotion. He

was wont to say, ' I am surprised at my tears, for I had
' a firm undaunted heart : death could not make me
' shrink formerly, nor did I shed a tear when I received
' my sentence.' Thus he afforded a striking fulfilment
of the words of the prophet, " And I will pour upon
the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jeru-
salem, the spirit of grace and of supplications, and they
shall look upon me whom they have pierced ; and they
shall mourn for him, as one that mourneth for his only
son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in
bitterness for his first-bornⁿ."

In this case was clearly manifested how utterly ground-
less is the common and ancient objection to the grace of
God, that it leads to licentiousness ; for I never yet saw
a man so broken-hearted with a view of his sins, or more
earnest so to walk as to please God. He used to say,
' Some people who come to see me, think, when they
' hear me ascribing all to Christ's work, and disclaiming
' any hope in my prayers and tears, that I despise prayer ;
' but if they knew my heart, they would see that I can
' scarce be a moment without praying to God, and prai-
' sing him for his great mercy to my soul : I pass the
' most of the night in that duty, and never weary in it.
' Before I knew the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, these
' duties were a great burden to me, because I could not
' get near to God, but now I delight in them.' He used
bitterly to regret his former unthankfulness to God for
the mercies of life, and when taking food would say,
' O how many meals have I eaten, without so much as
' remembering that there was a God that bestowed these
' mercies ! and when they were not made ready to my
' liking, I have even driven the dishes off the table, and

‘abused my servant in such a manner, as that the very thoughts of it lie heavy on my mind.’ And he would add, ‘Oh, beware of pride: I was very proud when in my fulness*.’

One day also, when speaking of the power of the gospel to excite to good works, he said, ‘I never gave any thing to the poor from a good motive, at least I had none of the motives I now feel. I believe the pride of seeing them about my door, moved me more than any thing else; but I was never led to it by the love of Christ. But I think now, if I was to live in the world, that I would take a different method; and if I had any thing to give, as I formerly had, I would go and search out for persons in distress, who perhaps could not get meat, or drink, or money to pay their rents; and when I heard of such, I would send them money, without informing them who gave it.’

In him was also manifested, in a striking manner, that ancient mark of believing the gospel, the love of the brethren for the truth’s sake, of which Peter speaks, connecting it with the belief of the truth: “Seeing ye have purified your souls, in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently^o.” Most happy was he in the company of his brethren in Christ Jesus. He soon adopted the views of the word of God, as to the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ, and the visible union of the people of God in

* He was some years ago in very easy circumstances in Dublin, but was reduced to poverty, as he mentions in his speech, by being disappointed in the payment of money advanced by him, in enlisting men for the king’s service.

their religious services, in separation from the world; and indeed he appeared in every respect of which his melancholy situation would admit, as one of that congregation of Christians to which I and others who saw him belong, as he certainly was, at any rate, our brother and companion in the kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ. In a very simple and beautiful manner, to one of these brethren he expressed his views of Christian love. ‘I know,’ he said, ‘as well what is in your mind with regard to me, as if I was acquainted with what was passing there.’ And upon being asked how that could be, he replied, ‘I know it by brotherly love; for I know if all you are possessed of in the world could save my life, you would freely part with it for me: and I know this to be the case, from the state of my mind towards you.’

As he manifested the greatest complacency in the brethren, so he showed the most earnest desire for the salvation of sinners. He could say in truth, that his heart’s desire and prayer to God was, that they might be saved. He said to one, ‘O that I had a voice that could reach the whole world, I would tell them of the grace of the Saviour. Were I to live in this world any longer, my chief delight would be in persuading sinners to fly to his blood: I would go to the greatest sinners, sinners like myself, and say all I could to lead them to Christ.’ And accordingly, he took opportunity to recommend to every person who saw him, the grace of the Saviour, and wrote a long letter to a number of prisoners in the room below him, warning them of their danger, and showing them the remedy; and upon the night previous to his death, most fervently set before the soldiers who attended him, the way of salvation through Christ.

He also displayed the greatest meekness of spirit, which manifested the change which had taken place upon him, for he was formerly of a very proud and vindictive temper; and he particularly showed the influence of the doctrine he had received, in the hearty forgiveness of all whom he considered to have any way injured him.

In these sentiments he continued till his dying hour, and, to the conviction of all who knew him, grew in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, enjoying the full assurance of the hope of the gospel. When he heard that an application for pardon was unsuccessful, it did not appear to give him the smallest uneasiness: and indeed he never appeared to have been any way interested in its fate; yet he, at the same time, well knew the workings of an evil heart of unbelief, and was at times tempted to desponding thoughts, but he said, that in these circumstances he always obtained deliverance, by his calling to remembrance that truth, by which his mind was at first relieved from perplexity.

During the last days of his life, he was most wonderfully supported; and I shall conclude this narrative with an account of his behaviour through the last night, and on the last day of his life, which will greatly confirm and illustrate the things which have been already noticed. Four persons sat up with him through the last night, and I suppose it is a night which they will never forget. They have since put down in writing the substance of what occurred; some of the most striking parts of which shall now be given chiefly in their own words. 'While we attempt to give a narrative of what passed, 'we find ourselves incapable to express his serenity of 'mind, and the joy and peace that appeared in every

‘ observation he made. In him we saw fully verified
‘ what the apostle Peter says of those to whom he wrote,
‘ *Whom having not seen ye love, in whom, though now ye*
‘ *see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory*^p. We went to him about half
‘ past nine: he was then conversing with a Christian
‘ brother on Micah, ch. vii. which he recommended to
‘ our serious attention, applying it to our situation in
‘ this world, on account of the fewness of our number,
‘ saying, we were only like the grape-gleanings of the
‘ vintage; and often did he with ardour express the
‘ prophet’s complaint, There is no cluster to eat, my
‘ soul desired the first ripe fruits; but, alas, the cluster
‘ of mankind were going the broad way to destruction.
‘ Let us only (said he) stand in the street, and take a
‘ view of the multitude that are passing, walking in the
‘ vanity of their minds, not knowing the things that be-
‘ long to their peace, nor in the least considering that
‘ their pride and vain glory must soon be laid in the
‘ dust, where there can be no distinctions among men:
‘ and you are like the gleanings, and like the small
‘ grapes, which the vain world make no account of; and
‘ I like a wild grape, hanging alone, which the Lord in
‘ his infinite mercy has brought in among you. He ex-
‘ pressed great delight in what is said in ver. 7. and re-
‘ commended it to us in our present despised circum-
‘ stances. He then applied the 8th and 9th verses to
‘ his case, as it would appear on the scaffold; took no-
‘ tice of the Lord being his light when sitting in the
‘ dark prison, and spoke with joy of the Lord bringing
‘ him forth to the light, and that he should behold his
‘ righteousness. He then spoke of the Lord’s forgiving

‘ mercy, as described in the 18th and 19th verses, and
‘ how far it exceeded that of man ; saying, When I ap-
‘ plied to man for the pardon of my offences, he would
‘ not grant it, but the Lord pardoneth all my iniquities
‘ and transgressions, because he delighteth in mercy.

‘ We were then led into a conversation about the way
‘ in which mercy flows to the guilty. He immediately
‘ referred us to the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, showing
‘ that it was through Christ’s stripes that we were heal-
‘ ed. He told us that Christ’s work was a finished work,
‘ quoting John xix. 30. *When Jesus had received the vi-
‘ negar, he said, It is finished : and he bowed his head,
‘ and gave up the ghost ;* and that God had testified his
‘ good pleasure in his finished work, by raising him from
‘ the dead, and setting him at his own right hand, that
‘ the faith and hope of the guilty, even of such as he,
‘ might be in God. This, said he, is the foundation of
‘ my hope towards God. I have God’s word for it, that
‘ whosoever believeth that Christ finished the work that
‘ justifies the ungodly, shall be saved. Why should I
‘ discredit God’s word? He cannot lie :—and he ex-
‘ horted us to put the most unlimited confidence in it.
‘ He added, that there were many instances on record
‘ of persons of the most wicked characters obtaining
‘ mercy, that none after them might despair. He par-
‘ ticularly enlarged on the case of Manasseh^q, who had
‘ enticed Israel to idolatry, filled Jerusalem with inno-
‘ cent blood, and caused his children to pass through the
‘ fire. He saw (he said) some circumstances in his case
‘ similar to his own : Manasseh was tried in plenty ; he
‘ was king in Israel, and there he rebelled against God ;
‘ but the Lord brought him to prison, dealt with him

‘ there, and brought him to repentance, showing mercy
‘ unto him, and forgiving him all his iniquities. And he
‘ added, the Lord also tried me in plenty, he tried me
‘ in want; in both situations I rebelled against him :
‘ at last he brought me into prison and chains, and made
‘ known unto me his amazing love and grace. He re-
‘ ferred us also to the case of Mary Magdalene, saying
‘ how vile a sinner she was, I think she was a common
‘ harlot, yet she obtained mercy ; also to that of Paul ;
‘ the Corinthians, some of whom were once noted trans-
‘ gressors ; and, lastly, to the case of the thief on the
‘ cross, which (said he) is a case so like mine, that I re-
‘ joice to find it on record.

‘ We here reminded him of a most comfortable cir-
‘ cumstance that attended Christ’s crucifixion, which was
‘ foretold in prophecy, *And he was numbered with the*
‘ *transgressors*^r ; and noticed that had he been number-
‘ ed with men of equal repute with Noah, Daniel, and
‘ Job, he would, in all propriety of speech, have been
‘ numbered with transgressors, but that this would have
‘ worn no favourable aspect to him ; but that he was
‘ numbered with those whom all the world agree to call
‘ transgressors, and saved one of them, to show that
‘ there is no room for the vilest to despair. He exclaim-
‘ ed, It is well for me that this is the case, and that the
‘ same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.

‘ He then spoke of the way in which sinners are saved
‘ by this mercy ; that it was by faith, and not by any
‘ works ; and for this directed us to the 4th chapter of
‘ the epistle to the Romans, saying, no works of ours can
‘ avail here, no prayers nor tears can ease the conscience
‘ pained with guilt : these I tried when under my heavy

‘burden, but still the load increased. I am not able to
‘describe the weight I found at my breast: could you
‘set all the weight of this prison upon me, it could not
‘equal it; but being by the grace of God led to see that
‘this great work is already finished on the cross, I then
‘found rest and peace. O the love of God to my soul!
‘it passeth knowledge, it will be a subject of song to me
‘through all eternity, for I shall never be able fully to
‘comprehend it. Would a friend come into prison, and
‘offer his life for mine, this indeed would be love; but
‘Christ so loved me, that he gave his life a ransom for
‘me, while an enemy, ungodly, and without strength,
‘yea, the chief of sinners. O the love of Christ! What
‘he suffered from his cradle to his grave! How shall I
‘requite it? Well might Mary embrace her opportunity,
‘and wash Christ’s feet with her tears, and wipe them
‘with the hairs of her head: she loved much, because
‘much was forgiven her. Simon felt nothing of all this,
‘though he needed forgiveness too: he gave him no wa-
‘ter for his feet, but Mary was at no loss for water, she
‘washed them with her tears; neither for a cloth to dry
‘them, she wiped them with the hairs of her head.

‘At his request, we spent most of the night in pray-
‘ing, praising, and reading the Scriptures; during which
‘time he often broke out in thanksgivings to God, and
‘said to us, were it not for the glorious gospel of Christ,
‘I certainly by this time would have been out of my
‘senses; but now I feel myself quite easy. Look at
‘me, see how composed I am, and consider the circum-
‘stances I am in; think what is to take place in the
‘afternoon: in the midst of all this I feel no uneasiness,
‘but what arises from Christ’s great sufferings for me.
‘He often expressed a longing desire for the hour of his
‘departure; and when the clock struck two, he lifted up

‘ his hands, exclaiming, Blessed hour ! referring to that
‘ hour in the afternoon.

‘ He was prevailed upon in the morning to lay him-
‘ self down for rest, which he did, and slept with great
‘ composure for upwards of an hour. When he awoke,
‘ he led us into a conversation about death, comparing it
‘ to a quiet sleep ; and then mentioning the agonies of
‘ death, he said, I feel quite easy in the view of it : two
‘ or three minutes will end all its pain. Oh, what is
‘ that compared to what Jesus suffered for me ! His
‘ sufferings make death easy to me : he took away its
‘ sting, and it shall be to me as if I bowed down my
‘ head beneath a cloud to lift up my eyes on the bright
‘ side of it.

‘ After this the jailor came to loose him from his fet-
‘ ters ; but it is impossible to describe the ecstacy of joy
‘ he was in from this time till we left him. Being at li-
‘ berty, he took the chain up in his hand and kissed it,
‘ saying, Oh, blessed be God for this chain ! and kneel-
‘ ing down and praying by himself, he again kissed the
‘ chain, and returned it to the jailor ; and earnestly ex-
‘ horted him to attend to the holy Scriptures, saying to
‘ him, Peace in your conscience, and the knowledge of
‘ Jesus Christ the Saviour, is far better than all you can
‘ get in this world. Think upon Jesus Christ, call upon
‘ his name : he is a kind and merciful Saviour, he will
‘ not refuse the petitions that are asked of him. Think
‘ on the comfort I have received ; for he has made dark-
‘ ness light unto me, and chains liberty. He then pray-
‘ ed, kneeling down, saying, I had it not in my power
‘ before to bow my knees to God. He thanked God for
‘ all the temporal mercies he had all his life received,
‘ without acknowledging the hand that gave them ; but
‘ especially he praised God for the gift of Jesus Christ,

‘ confessing his sins in the most humble manner, and
‘ praying for forgiveness through Christ’s blood. He
‘ blessed the Lord for the peace of mind he enjoyed by
‘ the gospel, and prayed that he might be supported to
‘ the last, concluding with these words,—Oh! Jesus,
‘ grant the same mercy to me which thou didst to the
‘ thief on the cross, who said unto thee, *Lord, remember*
‘ *me when thou comest into thy kingdom.* Lord, remem-
‘ ber me, now that thou art in thy kingdom, and bring
‘ me to thy glory. *Amen.*

‘ Perceiving us much affected, he took hold of our
‘ hands, beseeching us to remember that he was going
‘ to the Saviour. I have been (said he) caught like a
‘ sheep straying on the dark side of the mountains ;
‘ plucked like a brand out of the burning, half burnt.
‘ He then turned to the soldiers, saying to them, Sol-
‘ diers, look at my brothers ! Did you ever see a com-
‘ pany like this ? They are all in tears, like children
‘ weeping for their father. What is the cause of all this,
‘ think you ? You see they have lost their night’s rest,
‘ left their families and good houses, to sit in the dun-
‘ geon of a prison, and all for the sake of a poor thief.
‘ They knew nothing about me before I came here.
‘ What is it that influences them to this ? Why, I will
‘ tell you : it is because I believe that truth upon which
‘ they are united, and they love me because they love
‘ Jesus Christ. He then desired us to come and see his
‘ last appearance, saying, What will you think when you
‘ see me turned over ? I will tell you what to think :
‘ recollect the passage of Israel through the Red Sea,
‘ and Jordan, how the waters stood as a wall on each
‘ side, while they passed through dry shod ; just so shall
‘ I pass through the valley of death undismayed, with
‘ all its terrors on every hand.

‘ We were just going away, when he called us back, saying he would not part with us in tears, for (said he) we will smile when we meet again, and we must part in the same manner : and when we smiled, he seemed happy, saying, Farewel ! farewel ! I am perfectly happy, and we shall soon meet again never to part.’

I and two other persons went to him at twelve o’clock, with a view to attend him to the last. We found him beyond description joyful. As we remarked to one another, we had no need to say any thing : indeed he exhorted us to hold fast the faith. We spent the time till after two o’clock in prayer, praise, reading the Scriptures, and conversation upon them ; but he was able to say but little during the latter part of this period, for the ecstasy of joy he was in at first when we saw him, seemed quite to have overpowered him, especially when singing an hymn in which he greatly delighted, being the fifty-third of a collection of Christian songs, first published by the late Mr Glas, upon Christ’s words, “ It is finished !” And as he never afterwards recovered himself, his appearance on the scaffold, though very striking, was not equal to what might have been expected by those who knew him.

A little after two o’clock he came on the platform, where we obtained leave to accompany him at his earnest desire, though we were not permitted to speak to him about the ground of his hope, or to pray. Mr Hardie, one of the ministers of Edinburgh, attended along with two of the magistrates, although the prisoner had more than once petitioned that the attendance of a clergyman might be dispensed with*. The reasons of this

* It is proper to observe here, that there is no reason to suppose that the attendance of a clergyman, contrary to the desire

request were as follow :—Few of the clergymen of Edinburgh had ever seen him, especially from the time of his change of mind ; and any visits he had received, had by no means tended to convey the impression of their doctrine agreeing with the views he prized so highly, or of it being any way *gospel* or *good news* to one in his situation, but much the reverse. And besides, he had no favourable notion of the cause of national Christianity in which they were engaged ; having been led to attend to the good confession of Christ Jesus before Pontius Pilate, *My kingdom is not of this world.*—He sung the hymn already mentioned *. After this one of the magistrates proposed that Mr H. should pray. To which he answered, that he rather chose to pray himself ; upon which Mr H. retired.—He then prayed much in the same terms as before narrated, recommending his soul to the mercy of God through Christ Jesus. And when he had finished, after obtaining leave, he addressed the spectators, beseeching them to beware of the crimes which had brought him to that untimely end and deserved punishment, saying, that there was a God in heaven who would not suffer such crimes to pass unpunished. He told them with great energy, that they were sinners, and called on them to beware of every false foundation of hope ; to look to the cross of Christ, and behold in him an instance of the Lord's free mercy †. Having finish-

of the criminal, and the restrictions under which those were laid whom he wished to attend him, were owing to the magistrates in general, for one of these gentlemen seemed to take all this upon himself.

* See Appendix, No. I.

† In a spurious speech, published in a surreptitious manner, in which a good deal of the real speech was omitted, there was

ed his speech, he intended to have sung a part of the 102d psalm ; but the time allowed him not permitting it, after again praying a few minutes within himself, he, in the most firm and undaunted manner, submitted to the punishment that the law of his country had assigned him for his crimes.

Having thus finished the Narrative concerning WILLIAM MILLS, I shall at present conclude, reserving for another Letter some thoughts on the doctrine of sovereign mercy.

I am, &c.

also subjoined what was said to be his last speech on the scaffold, but very different indeed from what he really delivered.—See his own last speech in Appendix, No. II.

L E T T E R I I.

MY FRIENDS,

AN attentive consideration of the preceding Letter, will pretty clearly show the doctrine which I maintain concerning the way of salvation, and that I consider the work of Jesus Christ to be exclusively the foundation of hope to the guilty. Yet I thought it necessary to add to the Narrative contained in my former Letter, an explicit account of what I believe from the word of God, upon the all-important subject of the acceptance of sinners in the sight of Jehovah; and this general observation I would make in the outset, and beg to be kept in view through the whole, that the salvation of sinners of the fallen race of Adam, is entirely a matter of revelation. We have nothing else here to guide us but the word of God, and to this we ought therefore strictly to adhere. Nothing that our natural consciences know, or the works of God reveal, can in the least aid our researches in that important question, “Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, or bow myself before the high God^a.” The Lord alone could answer that question, as in mercy he hath done, revealing the good news of a perfect sacrifice, through which the guilty can draw nigh unto God^b.

In this Letter, we shall first consider the impossibility of any creature having hope towards God, upon any

^a Micah vi. 6—9.

^b Psal. xl. 6—9. Heb. x. 5—11.

other footing than by his free mercy revealed in the atonement, which will be manifest by attending to the account which the word of God reveals, of the lost and ruined state of man.

That all men are sinners, will be pretty generally admitted ; and it is a question that in all ages has puzzled philosophers, and such as by wisdom knew not God, how it happened that man alone, of all the creatures falling under their observation, appeared to act contrary to the end of his creation ? The Scriptures alone can solve this question, show how we became sinners, and ascertain the real extent and certain consequences of transgression. From them it appears, that sin and death were introduced into the world by the offence of our first parents. Thus it is written in the fifth chapter of the epistle to the Romans, and twelfth verse, “ Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that (or rather, *in whom*) all have sinned.”

Thus, by Adam’s transgression, he and all his posterity became subject to death, and all its attendant evils. “ Unto Adam the Lord God said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it, cursed is the ground for thy sake : in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life ; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee, and thou shalt eat the herb of the field : in the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground, for out of it wast thou taken, for dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return^c.” In this sentence all Adam’s posterity were along with him included : he fell as their pu-

blic head and representative ; and so the word of God declares, that death, which universally reigns, is not the fruit of every man's particular transgression, but the effect of Adam's sin : " Death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression^d."

But this is not all.—Not only are all mankind by Adam's sin consigned to one common grave, and exposed to every species of temporal misery, but it is expressly recorded, that after his fall he begat children, not after the image of God as he himself was created, but, " in his own likeness, after his image^e:" a likeness, alas ! rather to apostate spirits than to an infinitely good and holy God, and which was soon manifested by the conduct of his immediate descendents ; for of them, Cain shed his brother's blood, and that because he was more righteous than he ; and thus manifested himself to be the genuine offspring of him " who was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth^f."

All men, therefore, " are estranged from the womb : they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies^g." " Their hearts are deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked^h," naturally producing every evil action towards God and man ; for the Scriptures say, " Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies ; these are the things which defile a manⁱ." This is the black source of human evil, which necessarily flows out abundantly from this polluted fountain.

Thus man, as a descendent of fallen Adam, can neither love nor obey God ; nay, his mind is filled with

^d Rom. v. 14. ^e Gen. v. 3. ^f John viii. 44. ¹ John iii. 12.

^g Psal. lviii. 3, 4. ^h Jer. xvii. 9. ⁱ Matt. xv. 19.

hatred of God, and of his fellow-creatures ; yet in all this he is a free and voluntary agent. The conscious sense of his iniquity makes the thoughts of a just God irksome to his mind ; and the quick sense of his own interest and honour, induces the hatred of his fellow-men. Being thus led to the exercise of all ungodliness and inhumanity, he exposes himself to the pains of the second death, and is described by the apostle, as “ by nature a child of wrath^j.” *

j Eph. ii. 3.

* A great deal of controversy has of late arisen about what is termed *the extent of Adam's sin*, but what may be more properly defined, *the punishment of the disobedience of our first parents, equally affecting them and all their posterity*. Some, zealously attached to the words of the national standards of faith, insist, that the death threatened expressly included *death temporal, spiritual and eternal*, while others may perhaps have seemed too much to confine the curse to the *deprivation of animal existence*. But on the one hand, the Scriptures never immediately attribute the second death, or punishment in hell-fire, as to any of Adam's descendents, to his *one transgression*, but to their *own sins* ; and the apostle Paul, in the 5th chapter of his epistle to the Romans, does expressly affirm, that the whole of Adam's race must taste of this curse, even as all the seed of Christ shall live and be blessed through his righteousness, and therefore *eternal death* cannot be a part of it. On the other hand, surely more was intended in the sanction of the paradisaical life than merely descending to the grave. Man was to lose all that he then enjoyed by the gift of the Almighty : he was not only to forfeit immortality, but to be deprived of the favour and countenance of the Lord, which made immortality desirable ; and in token of this, he was expelled from the garden of Eden, from paradise, and from the presence of God. In consequence of the expulsion of our first parents from that heaven upon earth, all their descendents are born in a state of alienation from God, not in innocence, as some fondly dream, but in sin ; we are all by nature estranged from his fa-

Though by nature man is rendered quite incapable of loving and obeying God, yet he is capable, in some measure, of discerning his duty. There still remains as much of the divine law engraven on his mind, as to show him his duty, and convince him of sin in going astray ; and thus it is written, “ There is no respect of persons with God ; for as many as have sinned without law, shall also perish without law, and as many as have sinned in the law, shall be judged by the law ; (for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified ; for when the Gentiles which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing, or else excusing one another,)

vour, and enemies to him in our minds, which is made manifest at the most early periods of human life, and the youngest babes that are saved by him, who said, *Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of God*, are saved entirely by sovereign mercy, and must, as others, be washed and purified in the blood of the Lamb.—I must add, that although I am no advocate for modern forbearance, or for dispensing with the apostolic doctrines and precepts, yet I believe that there ought to be such a thing as forbearance in love among Christians ; and I do not think that there is any thing in these differences that ought fatally to divide asunder the people of God ; for they who attribute most to Adam’s sin, still heartily acknowledge that the guilty are condemned at last on account of their own evil works ; and they who think that the death contained in the threatening against our first parents, principally respected that death that passes upon all men, do yet fully attribute to Adam’s fall as the immediate and necessary cause, all that alienation from God, and corruption, that overwhelm the whole human race.—*Note to the third Edition.*

in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel^k." In this passage, the 13th, 14th, and 15th verses are inclosed in a parenthesis, in which the apostle vindicates the doctrine he had maintained, that they who sinned without law, *i. e.* the written law, should perish without law; and that they who sinned in the law, should be judged by the law, in the day of Christ. As to the Jews, he shows that the law promised life, not to the men who heard or knew these things, but who did them; and as to the Gentiles he declares, that their natural consciences did to them the part of the written law, this law being written in their hearts, informing them of their duty, and the demerit of disobedience; and thus the same apostle, speaking of men in the same circumstances, says, "Who, knowing the judgment of God, that they who commit such things are worthy of death; not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them^l."

The law which was engraved upon the heart of Adam, when he was created after the image of God, and may yet be traced in the hearts of all his posterity, in what is called natural conscience, which in every man still witnesses for God, was formally promulgated to the nation of Israel, and engrossed into the typical covenant with that people, although this eternal rule of righteousness itself could be no type, but was that very law which Christ came into the world to fulfil. This law in the most express terms shows us our duty, and the inevitable consequences of disobedience. It is summed up in two particulars, love to God and to our neighbour. It says, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength,

k Rom. ii. 11—16.

l Rom. i. 32.

and with all thy mind, and thy neighbour as thyself^m." To the perfectly obedient it promises life: "This do, and thou shalt liveⁿ." But it can show no mercy to any transgressor; "For it is written, Cursed is *every one* that continueth not in *all things* written in the book of the law, to do them^o." Who then can stand this test? Who can put his hand to his heart, and say he is clean? Let the advocate for human merit stand forth: if he can fulfil the condition, then let him claim the reward; but if he falters, if he speaks of human imperfection and frailty, let him stand confounded. The just and terrible God hath pronounced his doom, "Cursed is he;" and grace, free sovereign grace alone, can rescue him from destruction.

Agreeable to this view of things is Paul's account of this matter, in the third chapter of the epistle to the Romans, from the 9th to the 21st verse. He begins with asking this question, "What then? are we" (*i. e.* Jews) "better than they?" (*i. e.* Gentiles;) which he thus peremptorily answers, "No, in nowise; for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." He then collects a number of passages from the Old Testament scriptures, descriptive of the guilt of mankind, and in ver. 19. draws the conclusion, "Now we know, that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law, that *every mouth* may be stopped, and *all the world* may become guilty before God." The passages quoted, peculiarly applied to those unto whom they were first directed, and as *they* were the people who in point of righteousness claimed the pre-eminence over others, it followed of course, if *they* were brought in guilty, that every

m Luke x. 27.

n Luke x. 28.

o Gal. iii. 10.

mouth was stopped effectually, and none righteous, no not one.

If the foregoing observations have been attended to, the conclusion of Paul will be readily anticipated, “Therefore, *by the deeds of the law*, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight.” All flesh have corrupted their ways, are breakers of God’s law, and therefore under its curse, and every attempt to do and live, can only involve the deeper in guilt and misery. “By the law is the *knowledge* of sin:” it shows us our transgression, it speaks our condemnation, but it cannot show mercy, it cannot absolve.

But it is now time to proceed to a brighter subject, to that grace which has gilded the blackness of human misery, and brought salvation to the utterly wretched. This precious truth was first revealed to Adam in these words: “And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel^p.” Here arose the first dawn of human hope, and this remained as the clearest promise of deliverance through Christ, till the days of Abraham, when that glorious person, who was at first set forth in the wide extended view of a descendent of Eve, was particularly described as the seed of Abraham; yet still unlimited in the salvation he was to bestow, for thus did the promise run: “And in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed^q.” This promise was yet more clearly set forth to David, and his house was declared to be the family from which the glorious Deliverer was to spring. Thus Nathan said to David, “And when thy days be fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after

p Gen. iii. 15.

q Gen. xii. 3.

thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom^r." This last promise is the groundwork of the testimony of the succeeding prophets, as may be evident from consulting the few following passages out of many, Psal. lxxxix. Psal. cxxxii. ver. 11. &c. Isa. ix. ver. 6, 7. Isa. xi. ver. 1. &c. Jer. xxiii. ver. 5, 6. Amos ix. ver. 11, 12.

It was of absolute necessity that the Saviour of mankind should be a person of infinite dignity, and at same time clothed with human nature. Had he not been a true man, his work could not have benefited the race of Adam; and had he not been the living and true God, it would have been ineffectual to deliver from destruction: for the highest created being is bound by the law of his nature, to perfect obedience for himself, and no part of what he does can go to the account of another; neither could the blood of one creature make atonement for the souls of thousands, and righteously redeem them from perdition. In that view of things, we never could understand the reasoning of Paul: "If the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh, *how much more* shall the *blood of Christ*, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works, to serve the living God^s!"

The prophets who foretold the coming of the just One, set him forth as a person of infinite dignity. Isaiah declares, that he who was to sit upon the throne of David was the MIGHTY GOD: "Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful,

^r 2 Sam. vii. 12.

^s Heb. ix. 13, 14.

Counsellor, The MIGHTY GOD, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace: of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David^t," &c. And the same prophet introduces John Baptist, as thus testifying concerning him, "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD (or JEHOVAH), make straight in the desert a high-way for our God^u." Jeremiah thus writes concerning the seed of David, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth: in his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD (or JEHOVAH) OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS^w." And, not to multiply quotations, Zechariah sets him forth as the equal of the Lord of hosts, saying, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the MAN, MY FELLOW, saith the Lord of hosts^x."

The New Testament, in the most explicit manner, asserts the supreme Deity of Jesus Christ. The evangelist John thus writes on this important subject: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life, and the life was the light of men. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth^y." And agreeably to this account, Paul thus addresses the Philippians, "Let this mind be in you, which was also

^t Isa. ix. 6, 7.

^u Isa. xl. 3. compared with Matt. iii. 3.

^w Jer. xxiii. 5, 6.

^x Zech. xiii. 7.

^y John i. 1, 2, 3, 4, 14.

in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God ; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant^z."

In the forecited passage from John, that evangelist does not describe him as the " only begotten of the Father," till such time as he was made flesh ; which agrees with the account of this matter given by Luke, who thus speaks of the conception of Jesus : " And behold thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a Son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS : he shall be great, and shall be called the SON of the HIGHEST, and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David, and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man ? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee, therefore also that holy Thing which shall be born of thee, shall be called the Son of God^a." In these words of the angel, there is a manifest reference to the ixth of Isaiah, already quoted, and also to Isa. vii. ver. 14. " Behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a Son, and shall call his name EMMANUEL." The holy thing that Mary bore was EMMANUEL, the MIGHTY GOD in the form of an Infant of days ; and his name as thus manifested, was the SON OF GOD^{*}. Thus Jesus Christ, when

^z Philip. ii. 5. &c.

^a Luke i. 31—36.

* There is yet another sense in which Christ is declared to be the Son of God ; and that is, as the first-born from the dead, and inheriter of all things. Thus Paul, when preaching in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, says, " And we declare unto you

he speaks of himself as the Son, declares himself to be both inferior to the Father, and the equal of Jehovah. He says, "The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he *given* to the Son to have life in himself^b." "Of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father^c." And, "my Father is greater than I^d." While at same time he declared, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." As to which the Jews observed, "that he had said that God was his Father, *in such a sense* as to make himself equal with God^e." And also he declared, "I and my Father are one:" which the Jews interpreted to be claiming divine honour, for "they answered him, For a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy, and because that thou,

glad tidings, how that the promise which was made unto the fathers, God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee," Acts xiii. 32, 33. In that Psalm, this is connected with his receiving "the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." And so Paul, writing to the Hebrews, chap. i. 3—7. says, "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son."

b John v. 19. 26.

c Mark xiii. 32.

d John xiv. 28.

e John v. 17, 18.

being a man, makest thyself God^f." And at last they crucified him for blasphemy on that very account.

This then is the Person that came to save us, the eternal WORD, who is the living God in union with the Father and the Holy Spirit; for it is written, "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Spirit, and these Three are ONE^g." This is he who took a human body and soul prepared for him, and became one with the children which God gave him in flesh and blood, that he might redeem their souls from destruction. Being thus at once *the great God and our Saviour^h*. *He that made the worlds, and hath by himself purged our sinsⁱ*. *

The prophets who set forth the coming of the Mes-

f John x. 30. &c. g 1 John v. 7. h Titus ii. 13. i Heb. i. 2, 3.

* A little attention to what is said above, will show that I disclaim the idea of Jesus Christ being the Son of God by eternal generation. This is not to be found in the Scripture; and I cannot consistently hold, both that Jesus is the supreme and self-existent God, in union with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and that he was begotten by the Father in abstract Deity; which, if there is meaning in the sentiment, must tend to establish that the Father existed before the Son, and consequently that the Son is not the true God.

At the same time, I am willing fully to admit, that many who have been accustomed to consider Christ as the *Son of God* in abstract Deity, mean nothing more than that he is a divine person; and however inconsistent it may be, have no idea of inferiority in the Son, nor indeed of eternal generation; and it is highly proper never to lose sight of this truth, that the first and main idea attached in the New Testament to that appellation, undoubtedly is, that Jesus is *the true God*. It may be proper to add, that the Baptist churches in Scotland always made a difference upon this subject, in the above view of it, a matter of forbearance.—*Note to the third Edition.*

siah, also declared the end of his coming into the world. Isaiah says, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed: all we like sheep have gone astray, we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all^j." There is contained in these words a very full and clear account of the work of the Messiah, as a substitutional atonement for sinners, well agreeing with the declaration of Christ himself, "The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many^k."

The grand end for which the Son of God was manifested, was to redeem the guilty from the punishment, power, and effects of sin, by himself bearing that wrath which was due to their transgressions, and thus displaying the righteous character of God in the salvation of the worthless and wretched. Thus he died under the divine malediction due to sinners, as it is written, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree^l." In this view alone, we can comprehend his agony of soul and bloody sweat in the garden of Gethsemane, when he cried, "Oh, my Father, if it be possible let this cup pass from me^m." And his heart-rending exclamation on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken meⁿ?" His death is always set forth under the idea of a sacrifice for sin: "In all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faith-

^j Isa. liii. 5, 6.

^k Matt. xx. 28.

^l Gal. iii. 13.

^m Matt. xxvii. 39. Luke xxii. 39. &c.

ⁿ Matt. xxvii. 46.

ful High-priest, in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people^o." Accordingly, "once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself^p." And "offered himself without spot unto God^q," as the anti-type of all the sacrifices appointed under the law. And as in the death of Christ we behold him bearing the curse, so we also see him fulfilling the condition of life required by the law; for when, at the Father's command, he became subject to death in the room of transgressors, he displayed at once the highest love to God and to men*.

o Heb. ii. 17.

p Heb. ix. 26.

q Heb. ix. 14.

* The law requires us to love the Lord God with all our heart, soul, strength and mind, and our neighbour as ourselves, saying, *This do, and thou shalt live*; while it denounces vengeance upon all transgressors in these terrible words, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them*. It was therefore, without doubt, essential for the divine substitute both to fulfil its condition, and bear its curse in the place of the guilty; and thus when, in the 40th Psalm, he is set forth as declaring his undertaking, he not only says, *Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire, mine ears hast thou opened*; but also, *Thy law is within my heart*. The Lord Jesus Christ finished his work, both of obedience and sufferings, on the cross. Without meaning to exclude his previous agonies in the garden, or those stripes by which we are said to be *healed*, it was on the tree that he peculiarly bore our sins, and offered the true atonement; and the highest instance of his obedience, and his most exalted fulfilment of that law which requires perfect love to God and man, was surely displayed in his delighting to do that will, which required him to suffer, die, and bear God's wrath and indignation in the room of transgressors; our attention therefore in the word of God, is always peculiarly directed to Christ's death, as the justifying righteousness and true atonement for our sins; nor will we

This work of redemption Christ completely finished on the cross. He said, while he hung there, "It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost^r." But he was not left among the dead: he rose

find any countenance for those nice distinctions that have been keenly bandied about by the disciples of polemical divinity. It is sufficient for the simple Christian to know, that Christ is a divine person, who, in his life and death, has, as Mediator, given a complete and full obedience to every demand of the holy law of God, and made a perfect and satisfactory atonement. This is the foundation of his hope of acceptance, and of life eternal; and surely we need not be more critically accurate than the saints in heaven, whose songs are thus recorded, *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.*

I am sorry to understand, that some very keen disputes have arisen in this country upon this subject, among those who in most respects appear to be of one mind about the faith and obedience of the truth. It is surely sufficient to know, that there is a solid ground of hope in Christ's sufferings and perfect righteousness, and that when the ungodly are justified, they receive the forgiveness of all their sins through the atonement, and are accepted in the beloved, being introduced into a state of favour with God, through the worthiness of his Son; and truly the whole controversy, so far as I can comprehend it, is a difference more in words and forms of expression, than ideas; for on the one side it is firmly held, that Christ's previous obedience to the law could not have availed ought, unless he had suffered and died, and that in his death and sufferings we are to behold the most exalted part of that obedience; and on the other side it is freely admitted, that it was needful to the perfection of Christ's righteousness and atonement, that he should have been from his birth infinitely pure and holy, and have yielded unceasing and perfect obedience to every precept of the law.——*Note to the third Edition.*

the third day according to the Scriptures, and of infinite importance will the testimony concerning his resurrection appear, if viewed in the light of the word of God.

His resurrection clearly manifested the dignity of his person. There was a controversy all his life about who he was: multitudes counted him a wicked impostor, and many who were ready to acknowledge his claim to a divine mission, were yet as unwilling as the former to esteem him, *the Word made flesh*. Twice indeed did the Father, in the most solemn manner, vindicate his pretensions, by an audible voice from heaven; but still it was upon his predicted resurrection from the dead, that the truth of them chiefly turned; and thus he is said to “be declared (or *determined*) the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead^s.”

The sufficiency of the sacrifice he offered up, is also hereby manifested. He came, we have seen, to bear the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin: this work he on the cross declared to be finished. Now his resurrection proves this to be true, and demonstrates that the curse is borne, the ransom paid, and the cup of wrath due to sinners completely drunk up by the Substitute. Thus Christ says, that the Spirit would convince the world of a *perfect righteousness being wrought*, “because I go to my Father, and ye see me no more^t.”

The divine delight in this work, is also hereby fully manifested. This is indeed of the utmost importance. The search of a soul convinced of sin, is ever after what will appease the Deity^u; and no sacrifice could give peace to the guilty mind, but what had the most une-

^s Rom. i. 4.

^t John xvi. 10.

^u Micah vi. 6. &c.

quivocal testimony of the divine acceptance. Now the atonement of Christ has this testimony, that it pleases God. Not only during his abode upon earth did the Father declare his good pleasure in him^w, but this was in the most powerful manner manifested, when God raised him from the dead, and gave him glory at his own right hand. Then he received the most express testimony of the Divine approbation of his work; and indeed his resurrection corresponded with, and illustrated the testimony from the excellent glory, for Christ upon that occasion said to his disciples, "Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead^x."

In the work of Christ, the divine character shines forth resplendently. It is there alone that the name of God is fully unfolded, as it was declared to Moses, "The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty^y." Here we see the riches of Divine mercy and goodness, and at same time, strict justice and infinite holiness. When sin was charged to the account of Christ, the cup of sufferings could not pass from him except he drank it; "It became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings^z." And therefore "he set him forth a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare at this time his righte-

^w Matt. iii. 17. and xvii. 5. ^x Matt. xvii. 9. ^y Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. ^z Heb. ii. 10.

ousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus^a." In the work of Jesus Christ, we behold the true God; we see infinite love and grace manifested, in conjunction with the strictest justice and most unspotted purity: we acknowledge Divine wisdom in the contrivance of the wonderful plan, and Divine power in the execution of it.

This truth concerning Jesus Christ, is called the *gospel*, or the *good news*, by him who is the best judge of what ought to gladden the heart of man; and Jesus himself, after he arose from the dead, commanded it to be preached to *every creature*, adding, "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned^b." The way in which sinners are interested in Christ, and saved by him, is surely of great importance to be well attended to; for not only the present comfort, but the salvation of sinners, depends upon it. If men were left totally in the dark about the manner in which they were to be interested in Christ, what would it avail to have him preached unto them? or if the least shadow of respect be in this matter paid to human worth, or any good thing be required of the creature, what after all would remain but despair, for those who are conscious of nothing about themselves but what fits them for destruction? But happy is it for sinners, that the way of salvation by Christ is clearly revealed, and that it corresponds entirely with that grace which gave him to die for the ungodly. "He that believeth shall be saved." This is the faithful testimony of Jehovah. This declaration of salvation to the believer, is opposed to all anxious inquiries about how we are to be interested in the Divine favour: "The righteous-

^a Rom. iii. 25, 26.

^b Mark xvi. 15, 16.

ness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down: or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is *nigh* thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach: that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved^c."

The apostles, in preaching the gospel, never gave laboured and intricate descriptions of faith: they declared to the world the testimony of God; they were solicitous to enforce it by all the evidence which God had given of its truth; and they declared in language equally intelligible to the most refined philosopher, and the most ignorant savage, "He that believeth shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned."

The word *faith* is used in the Scriptures in the same sense in which men generally use it on common subjects; nor is there any other difference between divine and human faith, or believing God and believing man, than what necessarily arises from the high importance of the gospel testimony, above every human report; and the assured credit due to God as the speaker, in distinction from the most faithful and well-informed human witness. Thus John says, "If we receive the witness (or rather testimony) of men, the witness (or testimony) of God is greater^d;" *i. e.* worthy of more assured credit. The faith of the gospel then, is just believing it to be true upon the Divine authority: *He that receiveth his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true^e.* While *he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar; be-*

c Rom. x. 6—10.

d 1 John v. 9.

e John iii. 33.

cause he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son^f.

The way in which the ungodly are justified by faith, well corresponds with the sovereign grace manifested in the atonement. Paul, writing to the Ephesians, says, "By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast^g." And in his epistle to the Romans he thus speaks, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace, to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed^h." * From this it is evident, that if the salvation of sinners by faith did not entirely correspond with grace, they could not obtain the promise; and the same apostle opposes *faith* to all works, as directly as he does *grace*. His words are, "Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that *worketh not*, but *believeth* on him that justifieth the *ungodly*, his faith is counted for righteousnessⁱ." If this passage was duly attended to, it would teach us what to think of those who expect to be justified by exerting laborious *acts of faith*, as they are termed. For surely *acts* and *works* of faith are of the same meaning; and if sinners are justified by *works of faith*, then farewell to the apostolical distinction, *unto him that worketh not, but believeth*. We cannot confine works

f 1 John v. 10. g Eph. ii. 8, 9. h Rom. iv. 16. i ch. iv. 4, 5.

* It is not a little to be remarked, that salvation is of faith, for the very reason why many assert that it is impossible, *that it might be by grace*, that every idea of human merit may be effectually discarded, and divine mercy shine illustriously in the whole deliverance of fallen man. Indeed, no other plan could suit the situation of the guilty; for it is added, as a wise and merciful reason, *that the promise might be sure to all the seed*.

merely to good actions. He who is justified rather than another, on account of good things about him of which the other is destitute, whether these are works, dispositions, endeavours, or whatever they may be termed, is to all intents and purposes justified by works, *by what he is or does*, and not by what *he believes*.

We have seen, that when Jesus Christ gave commission to his apostles to preach the gospel, he commanded it to be proclaimed to *every creature*. The gospel declares salvation to every one that believeth without difference ; it pays equal respect to the *most renowned philosopher*, and the *most ignorant peasant* ; to the *strictest religious professor*, and the *most licentious rake*, or *abandoned harlot**. This doctrine, however galling it may be to human pride, is not only declared by the gospel, in the most express terms, but it is supported by a number of facts, tending clearly to illustrate and confirm it.

When Jesus Christ appeared in the world, as he had been described by his forerunner John Baptist, *exalting the vallies, making low the mountains and hills*, and re-

* I have here purposely chosen this mode of expression, in order to be understood. I have no measures to keep with the *religious world*, and therefore I am not afraid of their frown ; and I am convinced, that whoever censures the doctrine here maintained, must include in the same condemnation him who said to the strictest sect of his day, *The publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you*. Many of those who do so, who are teachers of a corrupted Christianity, and have the ear of the people, are the most dangerous enemies to that truth which they profess to believe. And not a few, even of the people of God themselves, are partly deceived by them, and led astray ; for I do not deny that such are in spiritual Babylon, but they are there in bondage and captivity.

vealing the glory of the Lord in the same point of view to all, his character was peculiarly obnoxious to the strict and devout of his day, who could not bear that all their claims should be laid low, and themselves brought upon a level with publicans and harlots. His doctrine was censured as leading to licentiousness, and his free and familiar conduct towards the chief of sinners, zealously condemned. They said of him, "Behold a gluttonous man and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners^j." And upon a particular occasion, when he showed mercy to a great transgressor, a Pharisee said, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who, and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him, for she is a sinner^k."

There are many now, who, in conformity to the religion of their country, pay respect to the name of Christ, who yet, we may say without breach of charity, had they been in the same circumstances, would have acted the same part; for they equally exclaim against the doctrine of sovereign grace, and ascribe the same consequences to the free declaration of it, as did their brethren in the days of Jesus. But why should the disciples of Christ be astonished at this? Is it not enough for them if they be as their Master? "If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household^l!"

It will not be easy for the friends of human merit to make their plan consistent with the New Testament. We cannot read the history of Jesus without perceiving, that in the distribution of his favours he acted as a sovereign, and in a way very stumbling and mortifying to the sons of pride. While he thus addressed the men of

j Luke vii. 34.

k Luke vii. 39.

l Matt. x. 25.

the first religious reputation, “Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell^m?” he in a numberless variety of instances bestowed salvation upon the confessedly guilty and worthless; and he who never saw this in reading the evangelists, never yet read them to any good purpose. But in order to give a view of this subject, we shall only attend to the way in which Jesus commenced and finished his mission, which will abundantly demonstrate the truth of that ancient declaration, “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercyⁿ.”

We have an account of Christ’s entering upon his public ministry in the 4th chapter of Luke; and particularly from the 16th to the 30th verse, we read of his preaching in the synagogue of Nazareth, where he had been brought up, applying to himself the 61st chapter of Isaiah, ver. 1. &c. Luke iv. 18, 19. “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.” The effect was, “That all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth;” but they added, “Is not this Joseph’s son?” and Jesus knew that, after all, they entertained false ideas of his grace, and expected a peculiar interest in his favour, on account of his carnal relation to them: therefore he thus proceeded to expose and refute their error, “Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician, heal thyself: whatsoever we have

heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. And he said, Verily I say unto you, no prophet is accepted in his own country: but I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow: and many lepers were in Israel, in the days of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, save Naaman the Syrian." This well agreed with the language of him who prepared the way of Messiah, and was mortifying indeed to the pride of the heart of man. We see from what followed that they could not bear it, for "all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

Thus ended the correspondence of Christ with the inhabitants of his own city, where he had spent his infancy and youth, and been held in the highest favour and reputation; and this piece of sacred history conveys most forcibly the instructing lesson, of the danger of any covert mistake about divine grace, which may lead us to suppose that we are, or may become more proper and natural subjects of it than other men.

The other instance I have in view, is that remarkable transaction which happened on the cross, recorded Luke xxiii. 39—44. "And one of the malefactors which were hanged, railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. But the other answering, rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly, for we

receive the due reward of our deeds ; but this man hath done nothing amiss. And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." In this history we see the true nature of grace in its freeness and sovereignty, as stated by Paul, Rom. xi. 5, 6. No works, either negatively or positively good, had this man to commend him. His transgressions were great, and they were long continued in, and highly aggravated, for he had just been joining with the multitude in railing against Jesus^o ; which, in his circumstances, as he himself noticed, when rebuking his fellow, showed peculiar hardness of heart. But here God's grace appears as having mercy upon whom he will ; of two sinners equally ripe for destruction, he saves one, and leaves the other (for aught we know) to perish in his sins.

There is here also set before us the true foundation of hope to the guilty ; and we perceive, in an approved example in real life, how the mind of a sinner is exercised when he believes the gospel. This man's hope could not be founded either on any good deeds done by him, or on any good resolves for the time to come. He had nothing about himself to think of, but an ill-spent life, issuing in a miserable and shameful death, as the due reward of his deeds. He thought of no difference between him and his fellow-transgressor ; nothing struck his mind but the infinite contrast between him, the vilest of sinners, and that perfect Pattern of righteousness, in whose company he suffered. Neither was he, in order to his obtaining mercy, anxious to have his guilt lessened, and some good change wrought upon his heart, to distin-

guish him from his wicked companion, and render him more deserving of the favour of Jesus. His persuasion was, that Jesus was able to save him, guilty as he was; and upon this persuasion his prayer proceeds. His confidence was placed entirely on what was *without him*, even in the truth contained in these words, *This man hath done nothing amiss*: implying his belief, that Jesus was indeed the Son of God, the King of Israel; that he was suffering, the Just One in the room of the unjust, and was in this very way going to take possession of his kingdom. In this faith, he presented to him his dying request about the most momentous of all concerns, saying, *Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom*: thus acknowledging him as the Lord of heaven and earth, as the hearer of prayer, and almighty to save. And well may we observe the gracious answer of Jesus to this prayer of faith, *Verily I say unto thee, to-day shalt thou be with me in paradise*.

At the same time, while he was thus led to believe in the name of Jesus, we must say, that an immense change took place upon his mind, a change that required no less power than that of the Almighty to produce; for we see the power exerted in turning a sinner from darkness to light, is likened to the manifestation of it in the resurrection of Christ from the dead, Eph. i. 19, 20. and to the display of Divine power in the works of creation, 2 Cor. iv. 6. *

* Upon no subject have more dangerous and perplexing mistakes been entertained, than respecting that change which is wrought upon sinners when they are converted, and which is distinguished in the sacred writings by several appellations, such as *repentance unto life*, *being born again*, &c. We are taught by the word of God, that the means of this is *the gospel*: men are

It may now perhaps be asked, How is a sinner to know that he himself is justified by the gospel ?

Upon this I would observe, that the gospel, as has been already noticed, declares salvation to the believer ;

said to be born again by *the incorruptible seed of the word*, and according to the will of God, *begotten by the word of truth*. In the subjects of this grace, there is no natural fitness, or acquired qualification : Jehovah saves the **UNGODLY** *through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast*. But we are often led to conceive, that there is some previous good change which prepares the sinner for grace, which is the seed of conversion, and places him in a better position for the favour of his Maker. Our most esteemed sermons are full of directions how to attain to this favoured state, and those who oppose such views, will very readily be branded as inimical to piety, by the zealous partisans of this doctrine. But how shall it be said to those who by these means are supposed at last to attain conversion, *By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast ?* And what can their faith be supposed to respect ? not surely the blood of Christ as saving the chief of sinners, and God as justifying the ungodly ; but Christ as the Saviour, and God as the Justifier of those who are properly qualified, and well disposed. We are led from the Holy Scriptures to believe, that there cannot exist any good disposition, act of devotion or work, without faith in Christ : all our *good works are works of faith*, all true holiness is derived from it, and we cannot call on him upon whom we have not believed, or acceptably worship the Lord, without the knowledge of his character as revealed in the gospel. Perhaps we have hit on a touchstone, as to preaching *the apostolic truth* and a *perverted gospel*. Men of the last description may, and do say many excellent things, about Christ and his work, and concerning the doctrine of divine grace, abstractly considered, while yet they render it of no value to the *worthless*, by not preaching it *freely*, without money and without price. We shall always find them exhorting their hearers to a certain kind of piety and devotion, preparatory to faith in Christ, considering these as pleasing to God, and re-

indeed it removes every bar that could stand in the way of the hope of *any creature who hears it*. No obstacle arises from the conviction of sin, for Jesus has made *complete atonement*; none from the righteous character of God, for he is *just, and the justifier of the believer in Jesus*; no objection can arise from a doubt about the gospel reaching any man's particular case, for *it is preached to every creature*; and no bar can occur, either from being left in the dark, about the way in which men are interested in it, or from something arduous being required of the sinner, for *he that believeth shall be saved*.

In this declaration, *he that believeth shall be saved*, the gospel is brought very nigh unto us; and when we consider, that this is the declaration of the faithful and true Witness, it surely gives ample ground for the most unlimited confidence in God for our own salvation. "The righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring Christ down: or, Who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead." And thus prohibits the anxious inquiries, which have been as anxiously answered by many teachers, about what men are to do, and how they are to be exercised, in order to obtain an interest in Christ. It also expressly declares, that "if thou shalt confess with

joicing over such appearances as a token for good, in place of warning their hearers against all self-righteousness, even of the most refined nature, plainly affirming that it is the path to the chambers of death, and declaring with confidence, to men of every kind and character, however it may affect their popularity in the religious world—BELIEVE ON THE LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND THOU SHALT BE SAVED.—*Note to the third Edition.*

thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." And in proof of this it is added, "For the Scripture saith, "Whosoever believeth in him shall not be ashamed; for there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him; for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved^p."

In every case whatever, the human mind is immediately conscious of receiving or rejecting a report. The evidence that convinces of a truth, must at the same time convince us that we esteem it true; and thus our sense of believing any truth, must just be in proportion to its evidence, and the degree of credit we give it. And shall we say that the testimony of God, who cannot lie, upon the most important subject that ever reached the ears of man, shall be the only exception to this rule? Far be it! Nothing but the unbelief of the human heart stands in the way of the most assured confidence in the gospel-testimony.

The word of God declares, that the blood of Christ purges the conscience^q; that is, when the testimony concerning it stands there as true. Purging the conscience, is just in other words removing the fear of punishment, and giving the sense of remission. Thus Paul, speaking of the inefficacy of the legal sacrifices, says, "For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshippers, once purged, should have had no more conscience of sins^r."

If a believer was to remain totally ignorant whether or not he was crediting the gospel testimony; his conscience surely could not be purged, for it is the truth of

p Rom. x. 6—14.

q Heb. ix. 14.

r Heb. x. 2.

God, that *he that believeth not shall be damned*; and if he cannot be at all conscious that he believes, till he has been for some time engaged in Christ's service, his conscience in this way could not be said to be purged by the *blood of Jesus*, but by his *own works*, not by *faith as justifying the ungodly*, but *as the principle of good dispositions*; and thus the gospel would be effectually converted into a Pharisaical scheme. But all works really good, must proceed from a conscience purified by the truth: "The end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned^s." And "the blood of Christ purges the conscience from dead works to serve the living God."

If sinners did not in some good degree enjoy the conscious sense of remission in believing the gospel, the reasoning of the apostle in the above cited passage, would not be conclusive; for thus it runs in its connexion, "For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God^t?" The apostle declares, that the blood of Christ known in the conscience, is much more effectual to give peace, and the sense of remission, than was the blood of bulls and goats to purify old Israel from their carnal pollutions, or ceremonial uncleanness; but surely this would not appear, if a believer had no knowledge of his interest in the atonement. How can peace of conscience be enjoyed by any man who is convinced of sin, and has no view of his iniquities being forgiven? Is there any thing that

^s 1 Tim. i. 5.

^t Heb. ix. 13, 14.

can or ought to ease his mind, while he confesses himself at the greatest uncertainty whether eternal life or endless misery shall be his portion?

In support of what has been already said, let us remember that the first Christians, whenever they believed, placed their confidence in Christ. It is said of the Ephesians, "In whom ye also trusted after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation"^u. Indeed, the primitive converts are always represented as rejoicing in the truth, and openly avowing their faith in Jesus as the Son of God and the Saviour of the world^w; and the ordinance of the Lord's supper, which the first churches *weekly* observed^x, is surely intended only for those who in some measure have the knowledge of Christ having died for them; for thus the Master of the feast addresses his friends in that ordinance, "This is my body which is given *for you*: this cup is the new covenant in my blood, which is shed *for you*."^y

I mean not however to say, that all Christians enjoy the full assurance of hope. The word of God supposes different degrees of faith and hope, while at the same time it earnestly exhorts to press after the highest assurance of both; and remaining unbelief and untenderness of walk, in so far as they prevail in the people of God, must damp their hope, and produce, in a corresponding measure, the spirit of bondage and fear*.

^u Eph. i. 13.

^w Acts viii. 39. &c.

^x Acts xx. 7.

^y Luke xxii. 19, 20.

* Though any person, attentively considering what is written above, will easily see my view of what a sinner is called to believe, yet I am willing to be understood by the most superficial reader. I do not maintain that a sinner is called to believe that Christ is his, by putting forth a certain strange act of the mind,

I would therefore have it carefully noticed, that no man can enjoy the comfort of the gospel, except in the way of daily repentance, and continued application to the blood of Jesus for pardon. It is only when we come with boldness to the throne of grace, through Jesus, to obtain mercy, that we continue to enjoy a heart sprinkled from an evil conscience^z.

Neither can any man retain the joy of the truth when walking in disobedience. Jesus Christ, in that memorable discourse which he held with his disciples before he suffered, while he omitted nothing that could fill their hearts with joy, enforced also this important truth upon them in the most pointed terms, well knowing the strange and awful deceits of the heart of man. In answer to the question put to him by Judas, "Lord, how is it that thou wilt manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?" he says, "If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and

called the *appropriating act*; in the course of doing which, *that becomes true which was false before*. Neither do I consider the faith of the gospel to be the persuasion, *that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me*; for this is not true of thousands to whom the gospel is preached. But I maintain, that a sinner is called to believe the following things:—*viz. That Christ is the Son of God; that in his death he has made a complete atonement for sin, manifested to be accepted of God by his resurrection; and that whosoever believeth this shall be saved*. I hold, that no man can be persuaded that Christ died for him in particular, unless by being assured, that he believes the gospel. This a man must be in a great measure conscious of when he believes, and he is more and more ascertained of it while he continues to walk in the Christian profession, *keeping the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus*.

we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. The Comforter, which is the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you^a." He also says in that same discourse, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's commandments, and abide in his love. These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full^b." Thus also Peter, writing to those "*who had obtained like precious faith with the apostles in the righteousness of their God and Saviour Jesus Christ^c*," declares, that by giving all diligence to add to their faith, virtue, knowledge, temperance, patience, godliness, brotherly-kindness, and charity, so as that these things might be in them and abound; they "should be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of their Lord Jesus Christ." But, adds he, "He that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins."

Thus it is evident, that he who does not with all his heart follow after holiness, cannot retain that joy which the simple truth bestows upon the guilty. He again becomes dark in his mind about the ground of hope, and forfeits the sense of remission in his conscience. He of necessity loses the experimental evidence of the gospel being true, by ceasing to feel its power upon his own soul: and his faith in it must of consequence be weakened, his conscience defiled, and himself in a fair way of total apostasy, whatever high-swelling words he may re-

^a John xiv. 22, 23. 26.

^b John xv. 10, 11.

^c 2 Pet. i. 1—12.

tain about grace, and the knowledge of the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

It is necessary here also to remember, that the New Testament always states the good works of Christians as the most infallible and certain evidence to their own consciences, that their faith is indeed unfeigned, and their joys not those of the hypocrite. Paul, writing to the Hebrews, states the self-denied works of love, as "*the better things that accompany salvation*^d," in distinction from the enlightening and comforting influences of the Spirit, which men have when they first believe, and which in some respects are common to those who continue to the end, and to those who fall away. The passage is remarkable, and well worthy of attention. The apostle having expressed his fears in the most awful terms as to some who had been once connected with that church, adds, "But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak. For God is not unrighteous to forget your work and labour of love, which ye have showed toward his name, in that ye have ministered to the saints, and do minister. And we desire that every one of you do show the same diligence, to the full assurance of hope unto the end. That ye be not slothful, but followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises." While the Scriptures set forth in general, "that hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments^e;" and that by giving diligence, to add to our faith of the gospel every Christian duty, "we make our calling and election sure^f:" they in a peculiar manner represent the love of the brethren as the grand evidence of men ha-

d Heb. vi. 9—12.

e I John ii. 3.

f 2 Pet. i. 10.

ving obeyed the truth through the Spirit ; and so John, in an epistle, the chief tendency of which was, to *assure them that believed on the Son of God, that they had eternal life*, thus describes the way they were to know this : “ We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren : he that loveth not his brother, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother, is a murderer ; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world’s good, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him ? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth ; and hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him : for if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things ; beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God^h. ”

Though the word of God does not speak of Christians when they first believe, as in a state of painful anxiety about their salvation, which would be inconsistent with joyful hope ; yet it must be said, that their hope and joy are increased, when they are heartily engaged in the work and labour of love. While they thus walk in the fear of the Lord, they also walk in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, who never fails to bear witness to the works of charity. And it will be firmly maintained by all the true fearers of God, that whatever a man may profess to have known about the joy of the truth, and whatever strong assurance he may boast of, yet if he can

live in the neglect of Christ's commandments, if (not to speak of gross crimes) he can indulge a lukewarm spirit *towards the brethren, an unforgiving temper to his greatest enemy*, or be counting that *his life consists in the abundance of the things that he possesses*, he has no reason to conclude that he is a believer of the gospel of Christ ; for " he that saith, I know him, and keepeth not his commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him ⁱ."

Such a person, if he consults the Scriptures of truth, will find, that instead of having any ground to conclude that he is justified, the fullest assurance is there given him, that unless he repents, he will perish for ever. Men may flatter themselves in their own eyes, but the verdict of the God of heaven is this, " He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death^j." " If ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses^k." And, " If ye live after the flesh, ye shall die^l." These are the true sayings of God ; and being evidently addressed to professed believers of the truth, they not only cut up by the roots the presumptuous hope of hypocrites and self-deceivers, but also move the disciples of Christ with fear, when *they* depart from the good ways of the Lord.

I shall now make a few observations upon the nature of that salvation which the gospel confers.

We noticed, that the gospel found men exposed on account of their sins to the wrath of God : upon men in this situation it confers free remission, and restores them to the favour of their Maker. It declares, " Be it known

i 1 John ii. 4.

j 1 John iii. 14.

k Matt. vi. 15.

l Rom. viii. 13.

unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins ; and by him all that believe are justified from all things from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses^m." And it is affirmed of all the children of God by faith, that " he hath made them accepted in the Beloved." Connected with justification, is salvation from wrath ; for it is said, " Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through himⁿ:" and also eternal life, as it is written, " That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life^o." Which agrees with the words of Christ himself, " God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life^p."

We also observed, that the gospel found men enemies to God in their minds by wicked works.

As sin is that which is highly dishonouring, and peculiarly displeasing to God, and that also which is the source of all unhappiness and misery to men, it was the gracious design and purpose of God, to deliver his people from their iniquities. Thus Paul writing to the Ephesians of the sovereign election of God, speaks of the grand end of it in this way. " Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love^q." And in his epistle to the Romans, he says, " For whom he did foreknow, he also

^m Acts xiii. 38, 39. Eph. i. 6.

ⁿ Rom. v. 9.

^o Titus iii. 7.

^p John iii. 16.

^q Eph. i. 3, 4.

did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren^r."

In the same terms with this eternal counsel of God, are the promises of the *New Covenant*: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; (which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord :) But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord^s."

In conformity to this purpose, and these promises of the new covenant, Christ shed his blood, not only to save his people from the *punishment*, but also from the *power* of their sins. "He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works^t."

We often see described the change which the gospel, by the power of the Holy Spirit, makes upon the hearts of men. Paul, writing to Titus, contrasts the former and present state of Christians in these words: "We ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, de-

r Rom. viii. 29.

s Jer. xxxi. 31—35. Heb. viii. 8—12.

t Tit. ii. 14.

ceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another; but after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour towards men appeared, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit, which he shed on us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour^u." Thus, so far is it from being true, that the doctrine of grace is inconsistent with holiness and good works, that, on the contrary, men are delivered by grace from the enmity of their hearts, and by sovereign mercy made holy, and enabled to show forth God's praise. "They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people, that they should show forth the praises of Him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light^v." And it is said, "Not of works, lest any man should boast: for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained, that we should walk in them^w."

As holiness is a great part of the salvation enjoyed through the belief of the truth, it is the testimony of the faithful God, that "without it no man shall see the Lord^x." It is as absurd to dream of eternal life without holiness, as to expect to enjoy it with our sins unforgiven; and by holiness I mean, not merely devotional duties, or outward strictness of conduct, though both of these are included in it, but the whole sentiments and behaviour being regulated by the law of Christ; even in the things most contrary to flesh and

^u Titus iii. 3—7.

^v 1 Peter ii. 9.

^w Eph. ii. 9, 10.

^x Heb. xii. 14.

blood, and most opposed to the conduct of the strictest and most devout professors of the day *.

The way of conformity to Jesus Christ, is always stated in the New Testament as the narrow way to eternal life. Paul, writing to the believing Romans, says, "But now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life^y." And also, "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die; but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live^z." And when writing to the Galatian churches, about the duty of liberality, now little understood by most modern professors of holiness, he thus addresses them, "Let him that is taught in the word, communicate unto him that teacheth in all good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap: for he that soweth to his flesh, shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit, shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting. And let us not be weary in well-doing, for in due season we shall reap,

* Nothing surely can be further from my intention, than to throw any stigma on true devotion, or the fear and worship of God, and a strict adherence to the duties of the Christian life. I wish most earnestly to plead the cause of Christian devotion and godliness, and a conscientious regard to all the commandments of Jesus. But it is too evident, that the righteousness of many who have the words *piety* and *devotion* perpetually in their mouths, does not exceed the righteousness of the *Scribes and Pharisees*, for they are equally inimical to that *Divine grace through righteousness* that is the refuge of the guilty, and to its genuine influence on the hearts and lives of those that supremely esteem it, leading them to become followers of the churches of God, which in Judea were in Christ Jesus.

if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men, especially unto them who are of the household of faith^a."

Thus professors of the faith are judged at the last day by their works, and by such works as are now little thought of, even by their work and labour of love, manifested to Christ's name, in acts of kindness done to his people for his sake. The Son of man shall then pass sentence upon the professors of his name, in the following terms* : " Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me in ; naked, and ye clothed me ; I was sick, and ye visited me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto me." And to the question, " When saw we thee," &c. " the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.—Then shall he say also to them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels ; for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat ; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink ; I was a stranger, and ye took me not in ; naked, and ye clothed me not ; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not." And to the question, " When saw we thee," &c. shall he " answer them, say-

a Gal. vi. 6—11.

* It is evident, that the works approved in that day are acts of mercy done to Christ's brethren, and *that* because they belong to him. It would be well, if the advocates for the merit of good works would examine if they have any of these.

ing, Verily I say unto you, in as much as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me^b."

As Jesus Christ in that day shall give an impartial representation of what now takes place upon earth, no man has any reason to think that he shall be welcomed to the kingdom, who is not loving the brethren of Christ, because they belong to him, and doing them good as he has opportunity.

I would only further observe, that all acceptable holiness must proceed from the belief of the truth. So Paul says to the Ephesians, "Put on the new man, which after God is created in the righteousness and holiness of the truth^c," (for so the words ought to be rendered); and this corresponds with the prayer of Christ, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth^d."

In the truth alone, we can discern motives to lead us to repentance for our sins, to fill us with love to God, and to make us walk in his fear; for in that truth we behold the most astonishing display of grace and love, we there see the most tremendous manifestation of justice, we are made acquainted with the infinite malignity of sin, and are ascertained that "we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ, that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad^e."

Before closing this Letter, I beg leave to insert some objections which have been made against the doctrine contained in it, with answers to these objections, as both were sent me by a friend*.

b Matt. xxv. 31. to the end. c Eph. iv. 24. d John xvii. 17.
e 2 Cor. v. 10.

* Mr W. BRAIDWOOD.

‘ I HAVE made out a few remarks in answer to the objections which are with great zeal urged by many, against the doctrine that was taught the late William Mills, in the faith of which he died. If you think they will be of any use, they may be published along with the account you mean to give of this doctrine, which is now, as it was in the days of the apostles, every where spoken against. They are as follow :

‘ 1st, It is objected, *That this doctrine levels all mankind : the most respectable moralist differs nothing from the hardened wretch, who is justly condemned to suffer death by the laws of his country : thieves and robbers are as good men as those who are sober, just, and temperate. Can any thing be more absurd than this ? Is it not equally opposite to the plainest declarations of Scripture, and to all the principles of reason, justice, and humanity ?*

‘ I believe it is as far from your intention as it is from mine, to lessen the crimes of any ; and I am decidedly of opinion, that all men are not equally sinful. There are some who “ have sold themselves to commit iniquity, whose consciences are seared as with a hot iron, and who work all uncleanness with greediness.” Crimes which are hurtful to society, require to be punished ; and those who suffer as murderers, thieves, and evil-doers, must of necessity appear more sinful in the eyes of men, than the sober and decent part of mankind. They are also criminal in the sight of God, in exact proportion to the just demerit of their evil deeds. The most specious acts of injustice and oppression, which mankind in general practise with impunity, such as going beyond, and defrauding one another in their dealings, shall not escape his notice ; for he is the avenger

of all who are thus defrauded^f. Theft is a great crime in his account, for “the unrighteous, thieves, and covetous, shall not inherit the kingdom of God^g.” But, above all, a murderer is exposed to the vengeance of the Almighty; for while his law, as it respected human society in the kingdom of Israel, required only restitution from a thief, it declared, in the most express terms, “Ye shall take no satisfaction for the life of a murderer, who is guilty of death; but he shall be surely put to death^h.”

‘There is evidently, therefore, in God’s account, a difference in the demerit of crimes, both as committed against himself, and against our fellow-men. This is manifestly implied in the doctrine we contend for. Do we not affirm, that there are many instances particularly noted in the Scriptures, of the *vilest sinners* being saved by the grace of God? And do we not also maintain, that his grace could not appear in all the lustre of its greatness, freedom and sovereignty, if it did not save those, who are both in his account and ours, *more heinous transgressors than their fellow-men*, and deserve to be accounted *the chief of sinners*.

‘Yet men often judge, not according to truth, when they determine who are the greatest sinners in the sight of God. This depends upon a variety of circumstances, of which no cognizance is taken by human laws, such as, the motives of their hearts, which God alone can fully know, the opportunities they have had of being instructed, and the peculiar temptations to which they were exposed. At any rate, when this is possible, it requires more attention to the word of God, than most people are disposed to give to it; for the generality of

f 1 Thess. iv. 6. g 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. h Num. xxxv. 31.

mankind, are guided more by caprice and custom, than by that unerring standard, in judging of the true demerit of crimes. It is not uncommon, for instance, to see blasphemers and adulterers, joining in the general cry against thieves and robbers, insulting them, and loading them with reproach and infamy; while they do not consider, that their own crimes are more highly aggravated in the sight of God, being such as he commanded to be punished with death in the kingdom of Israelⁱ.

While then it is acknowledged, that some are greater sinners than others, this is no objection to the doctrine of the Scripture, which represents all men as involved by nature in one condemnation, and therefore equally needing that salvation, which comes freely to the vile and worthless, through the blood of Christ. See Rom. iii. Eph. ii. All are equally destitute of any just claim to the Divine favour, for "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God^j." The Psalmist says, "If thou, Lord, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand^k?" Those who shall not stand when he marks iniquities, are not merely such as may be reckoned, in comparison of others, ungodly and profane, but all who have committed sin; for it is not said, If thou shouldst mark great offences, or uncommon and highly aggravated transgressions, but if thou shouldst mark iniquities, who shall stand? And again, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified^l." Which agrees with the apostle's declaration, when treating of the same subject, "By the deeds of the law, there shall no flesh be justified in his sight^m."

i Lev. xxiv. 16. and xx. 10.

j Rom. iii. 23.

k Psal.

cxix. 3. l Psal. cxliii. 2.

m Rom. iii. 20.

‘ Are not all mankind thus placed on a level in point of justification before God? The same grace that saves the most profligate wretch in the world, is necessary to found the hope of those who plume themselves on their freedom from gross sins, and their comparatively blameless characters.

‘ This will appear still more evident, when it is considered that the Scriptures represent *all men*, in their natural state, as “enemies unto God in their minds by wicked worksⁿ ;” as “dead in sins^o ;” the slaves of sin^p ; “free from righteousness,” and thus incapable of any thing but sin^q. The enmity of the hearts of men against God and his law, is expressed in different ways ; in some, by such a desire of pleasure, riches, and honours, as is reputable enough in the world, but condemned by the word of God ; in others, these lusts become so prevalent, as to hurry them on to the commission of crimes which bring them to an untimely end ; but the root of every evil is naturally in the heart of every man^r. And no one is prevented from the most daring acts of wickedness by the love of God, or a desire to glorify his name, till he is made to understand this joyful truth, that God is just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus ; for thus alone is the enmity of the heart destroyed.

‘ 2d. Another objection is, *This doctrine leads to licentiousness. Profane sinners will be hardened in their guilt, by presuming that they may sin with impunity ; for they are taught to imagine, that they have as good a*

n Col. i. 21.

o Eph. ii. 1. 5.

p Rom. vi. 17.

q Rom. vi. 20. and iii. 11, 12. and viii. 7, 8.

r Matt. xv.

18, 19, 20.

chance for heaven, as those who are virtuous and sober. Whatever course of life they pursue, they will be happy when they come to die, for, according to this doctrine, the grace of God is free to the worst of mankind; and is even magnified in proportion to the greatness of their guilt.

‘ This objection is as old as the days of the apostles; for some affirmed that they said, *Let us do evil that good may come*^s. An awful reply is made to this, *Whose damnation*, says Paul, *is just*; implying, that those who drew such conclusions from the doctrine which he taught, exposed themselves to the utmost danger. He nevertheless, in that very chapter, and the two following ones, opens up the doctrine of justification, through the righteousness of Christ alone, and sets forth the grace of God in all its riches, freedom and sovereignty. He then asks, “Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound^t?” This thought he rejects with the utmost abhorrence: “God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein^u?”

‘ It must be allowed indeed, that there were men in the days of the apostles, “who turned the grace of God into lasciviousness;” and many such there are still. Of these Jude speaks, in language the most pointed and severe of any that is to be met with in all the word of God, showing the hatefulness of their iniquity, and the certain destruction to which they were doomed. These are the most detestable of all characters. Whatever pretensions they may have to the knowledge of the grace of God, they are represented as “denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ^v.”—“They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, be-

^s Rom. iii. 8.

^t Rom. vi. 1.

^u Rom. vi. 2.

^v Jude 4.

ing abominable and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate^w." Professors of the faith are often reminded, not only of the danger of this, but also of unfruitfulness in the profession of the name of Christ^x. Those whom "the grace of God, which bringeth salvation, hath not taught to deny ungodliness, and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world^y," have the fullest reason to conclude that they know it not. And even believers themselves, when they disobey any of Christ's laws, or become lukewarm and inactive, are thus alarmed and roused to a sense of their danger; for no man has any right to esteem himself a believer of the gospel, unless he now obeys the commandments of the Lord and Saviour, however much he may have formerly appeared to do so^z.

'Men may speculate about the grace of God; they may have distinct and accurate notions of the doctrine of justification through the righteousness of Christ, so as to enable them to speak fluently upon the subject, and perhaps also boast of their enjoyments, while they are totally ignorant of the true grace of God, as it gives relief to a guilty conscience. They never were pained with a sense of guilt, nor afraid of the just indignation of God; therefore, all the high sounding expressions they make use of about grace, have no meaning as to them. They see not how much they stand in need of grace, and thus it yields them no solid consolation, or

w Tit. i. 16. x Matt. vii. 21. to the end. John xv. 1—6.

1 John ii. 4. James ii. 15. to the end. y Tit. ii. 11, 12.

z John viii. 31, 32. John xiii. 13—17. Chap. xiv. 21, 24. Chap. xv. 8, 9, 10, 14. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10. Gal. vi. 3—10. Heb. vi. 4—12. 2 Pet. i. 5—11. 1 John iii. 14. to the end.

joyful hope. It is no wonder that the influence of what such men profess to believe, does not appear in their practice. The reason is plain, because, whatever they may say about it, they do not really believe. Let none therefore impute to the doctrine, that which is diametrically opposite to its nature and tendency, and arises solely from the corruption and hypocrisy of the hearts of men.

‘ The *nature* of that salvation which we attribute to the riches of sovereign mercy, is such as to exclude the possibility of those who really enjoy it, being *thereby* encouraged in the ways of sin. It does not merely consist in freedom from condemnation, the enjoyment of the favour of God, and eternal glory ; but deliverance from the power of sin is also an essential and important branch of this salvation. Those who now partake of that abundant mercy which is revealed in the gospel, were predestinated to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ^a.’ They are “ elect, according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ^b.”—“ He hath chosen them in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love^c.” All which passages, and many more that might be mentioned, evidently show that the purpose of God to save his people, equally respects their deliverance from wrath, and from the power of sin. This is also one of the great promises of the new covenant: “ I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts^d.” And when “ the Lord God of Israel actually visited and redeemed his people, and raised up an horn of salvation for them

in the house of his servant David," this was one part of his grand design, that they, "being delivered out of the hands of their enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of their lives^e." This is also declared to be one of the great ends of the death of Christ; for "he loved his church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water, by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy, and without blemish^f." This too is what God intends by all the blessings and privileges which he confers upon his people; for the reason given why "they are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a peculiar people," is, "that they should show forth the praises of him who hath called them out of darkness into his marvellous light^g." Thus, it is manifest that the doctrine we maintain cannot fail to purify the hearts of all who believe it^h, and lead them to perfect holiness in the fear of Godⁱ; unless the objectors can make it appear, that God's eternal purpose may be frustrated, that his promise may fail, that Christ is dead in vain, and that all the blessings which the Lord freely bestows upon his people, with the declared intention to make them holy, can only lead them to delight in sin. If these suppositions are profane, the objection which leads to them must be so too.

' The doctrine which was declared to the poor criminal, must deeply impress the hearts of all who believe it with the most awful view of the malignity of sin, and

e Luke i. 68, 69. 74, 75.

f Eph. v. 25, 26, 27.

g 1 Pet.

ii. 9.

h Acts xv. 9.

i 2 Cor. vii. 1.

the punishment it deserves ; and is that alone, which can furnish with sufficient motives to obedience.

‘ Was ever any such display given to men of the Divine indignation against sin, and the impossibility of its passing unpunished, as when the Son of God hung upon the cursed tree, and there expiated the sins of the ungodly ? If it was necessary for the salvation of sinners that the Prince of life should be killed^j, that God should bruise his own Son, put him to grief, and make his soul an offering for sin^k, doth not this loudly proclaim that he is the most holy Lord God ? And must not those, who see his character thus displayed, serve him with reverence and godly fear, knowing that our God is a consuming fire^l.

‘ There is also, in the cross of Christ, the highest possible display of the goodness and mercy of God to sinners. His love, thus manifested, infinitely transcends all that is to be seen among men^m. It is in this wonderful transaction, that we see him rich in mercyⁿ. By this it is fully manifested, that God is love^o. And is it possible to discern this without loving him ? *We love him*, says the apostle John, *because he first loved us*^p. The stoutest and most obdurate hearts are thus subdued. This we know is the case even among men. Who would not love a kind and disinterested benefactor, especially if his own conduct had been such as led him to expect nothing but resentment ? Much more surely will the hearts of sinners be filled with love and gratitude to God, when, conscious that they deserved nothing but wrath and destruction, he makes known to them the ex-

j Acts iii. 15.

m Rom. v. 7, 8.

p 1 John iv. 19.

k Isa. liii. 10.

n Eph. ii. 4.

l Heb. xii. 28, 29.

o 1 John iv. 8. 16.

ceeding riches of his grace, pardoning all their sins, and filling them with the joyful hope of his salvation. If we thus love him, we must surely keep his commandments^q. We must be constrained by the love of Christ, *to live not unto ourselves, but unto him that died for us, and rose again^r*. Thus believers of the gospel are besought by the mercies of God, to the performance of every duty^s. They consider themselves not their own, but bought with a price; and therefore bound to glorify God in their bodies, and in their spirits, which are God's^t.

' The unspeakable blessings they have already obtained, the forgiveness of their sins, peace with God, the Spirit of adoption, and deliverance from all their spiritual enemies, must deeply impress upon their souls a grateful sense of the love of God, and lead them to think that they never can do enough for Christ. The hope of that life and immortality which the gospel reveals, produces in them the very same effect; for, says the apostle John, "Every man that hath this hope in him, purifieth himself, even as he is pure^u." And Peter, when assuring those to whom he wrote of the coming of the day of God, the destruction of the world, and perdition of ungodly men, thus improves the subject: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be, in all holy conversation and godliness? Looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God^v." And again, "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent, that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless^w."

q John xiv. 15. 21.

r 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

s Rom. xii. 1.

t 1 Cor. vi. 20.

u 1 John iii. 3.

v 2 Peter iii. 11, 12.

w 2 Peter iii. 14.

‘ Is not this doctrine *according to godliness* ? Doth it not powerfully enforce upon Christians every motive that can fill their souls with detestation of sin, fervent love to God, a fear of offending him, and an earnest desire to glorify his name ?

‘ As to that part of the objection, which supposes that the doctrine of the grace of God, which levels all distinctions among mankind, will harden men in their guilt, from this consideration, that they have as good a chance for heaven, as those who are decent and sober—I answer, The word of God speaks nothing of any having a *chance* for heaven, but states this matter upon the surest footing, “ He that believeth, shall be saved : he that believeth not, shall be damned^x.” The evidence of believing the gospel has been already mentioned, which fully shows, that we consider none as partakers of the grace therein revealed, whose hearts and conduct are not regulated thereby. Such persons, therefore, have no encouragement to continue in that situation, which excludes them from the kingdom of heaven. And as to the hope of their being afterwards delivered by the grace of God, his word declares to all, “ *Now* is the accepted time, *now* is the day of salvation^y.” The hardened sinner, who this day rejects the gospel of salvation, may be landed ere to-morrow in everlasting misery^z. Where then is the encouragement given to delay faith and repentance, in the hope of afterwards obtaining them, supposing it were possible for men to do so ? But the true reason why they do not believe, is because they hate the truth, and they repent not, because they love their sins ; and must not every one, who knows any thing of the word of God, and the workings of the

x Mark xvi. 16.

y 2 Cor. vi. 2.

z Luke xii. 20.

human mind, perceive that this situation is totally inconsistent with any wish, ever to obtain faith and repentance?

‘ Let none then grudge salvation to this poor thief, from an apprehension that others will be led, by that which was the ground of his hope and joy, to injure their fellow-men; for not only would their enjoyment of this hope produce the very opposite effect, as hath been already shown, but it is also sufficiently manifest, that the most profane sinners are not easily induced to believe the same doctrine. Even *they* are affronted, if it should be supposed that they stand in need of free and sovereign mercy; they too, however foolish it may appear, must have in themselves a ground of glorying, so that, in this respect, there is no difference between them and their decent neighbours: both are perfectly agreed in opposing the grace of God.

‘ At same time, I readily acknowledge that there is more hope of openly profane and abandoned sinners listening to the gospel of the grace of God, than those who plume themselves on their freedom from gross sins, and their outward sanctity and devotion. These last are fortified by a religious principle, against all that can be said to them about sovereign mercy, and can scarce be brought to allow that they are sinners; whereas, the former lie open to conviction, and must in some measure be sensible, if they think at all, that they are justly exposed to the vengeance of the Almighty. Thus Jesus says to the Pharisees, who *trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others^a, Publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you^b*. The parable of the publican and Pharisee, shows also

^a Luke xviii. 9.

^b Matt. xxi. 31.

how much these self-righteous men are above being indebted to mercy, and how hateful they are on this account in the sight of God ; whereas they, who, like the poor self-condemned publican, have nothing to say, but *God be merciful to me a sinner*, are justified, and not the other^c.

‘ Is it not unreasonable in the highest degree, to exclude from the benefit of the gospel those who are acknowledged by all to stand most in need of it? The outwardly righteous men among the Jews acted thus*, when the Saviour himself preached the glad tidings of salvation. They gave him this name as a term of reproach, *a friend of publicans and sinners*, and often

c Luke xviii. 10—15.

* I have considered this and the foregoing objection in their fullest extent, as they plead the cause of the most specious and devout opposers of the grace of God, whose conduct in many respects is irreproachable in the eyes of men. The answers will therefore apply with still greater force to profane swearers, drunkards, unclean persons, and such like ; many of whom, on this occasion, have had effrontery enough to urge the same objections. To them it may be fitly said, “ Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest ; for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself, for thou that judgest doest the same things,” (or things as manifestly excluding from the kingdom of heaven). “ But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth, against them who commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them who do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness, and forbearance, and long-suffering ; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, who will render to every man according to his deeds.” Rom. ii. 1—6.

complained that he kept company with such persons, and even ate and drank with them. He owned the charge, but he gloried in it ; and persisted in showing compassion to the most vile and worthless, saying, “ The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost^d.”—“ They that are whole need not a physician, but they that are sick : I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance^e.” The very intention of his coming into the world was to save sinners, which would have been entirely frustrated, if such had not been called to repentance. Happy is it for sinners, that while thus excluded from mercy by their fellow-men, the Lord of heaven and earth hath openly acknowledged himself their friend, abasing the pride of those who glory in their own worth, and condemning all who grudge salvation to the very worst of men. It hath pleased him thus to magnify the riches of his grace, and who can say unto him, *What doest thou ?*

‘ 3d. There is still another objection of equal importance with any of the former, and that is, *You make no account of repentance, contrition, and godly sorrow on account of sin, and lead people to think lightly of devotional exercises ; for whatever you may say about these things, the strongest incitement to them is undoubtedly removed, when salvation is made to depend entirely upon the finished work of Christ, and no place is given to these exercises, as forming any part of a sinner’s hope.*

‘ Nothing can be a greater mistake than this ; for so far from setting aside repentance, prayer, and other devotional exercises, these can only be produced by the doctrine against which the objection is levelled. Men

d Luke xix. 7, 9, 10. e Matt. ix. 10, 11, 12. Luke v. 29—33.

indeed, without any view of the atonement of Christ, may be convinced that they are sinners, and exposed to the wrath of a sin-avenging God. If these convictions are deep and lasting, their souls will be filled with slavish fear, and the most dreadful apprehensions of that wrath of God, which will undoubtedly come upon the children of disobedience; these, if not removed by a view of the mercy of God in Christ, or, which often happens, by worldly pursuits and amusements, will land them in absolute despair. A situation of this kind, or any thing that approaches to it, has surely no tendency to make any one draw near unto God, or humbly to confess those sins which he is convinced must bring upon him everlasting destruction. All his efforts, while in these circumstances, must be to ease his conscience, by persuading himself that he is not quite so sinful as he had been led to imagine, or by acts of devotion and greater strictness in his future conduct, to atone for his past sins; and, alas! he will find many to encourage him in this fruitless labour. Will this produce repentance, godly sorrow, and an ingenuous confession of sin? Are not all the attempts of men to please God in this way, set in direct opposition to a full conviction and acknowledgment of their ruined, helpless, and miserable situation?

‘ I mean not, however, to speak lightly of such convictions. The situation of those who labour under them is very moving, and claims the sympathy of all who, like them, have experienced the terrors of an awakened conscience, and have obtained that relief which the atonement of Christ alone is suited to give. The salvation proclaimed in the gospel meets exactly the situation of those, to whom nothing presents itself from any other quarter but guilt, despair and death. Indeed, this must be the case, in some measure, with all who are comfort-

ed by these glad tidings of salvation, for they have no meaning but in relation to the guilt and wretchedness of those to whom they are preached. Far be it from me, therefore, to say any thing that would have the smallest tendency to lessen the guilt of the most trembling self-condemned sinner ; or, on the other hand, to mock his misery, by telling him, as some have done, that his convictions are self-righteous. Nothing surely can be more opposite to self-righteousness, than a full conviction in a person's mind, that he is the chief of sinners. The view he has of his sin and misery is just and proper, though he may greatly err as to the means of obtaining relief. Those who know the truth, should therefore set before him that all-sufficient remedy which God hath provided, whereby *he healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up their wounds*^f.

‘ This was the course the apostles followed ; for when the convicted Jews *were pricked in their hearts, and said, Men and brethren, what shall we do ?* Peter seems to have considered their question rather as expressive of their anguish and despair, than of any desire they might have to live by their own doings ; for, without saying any thing of self-righteousness, he immediately answers thus, *Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins :* leading them at once to that very Saviour whom they had crucified, for peace to their guilty consciences^g. In like manner, when the jailor, trembling and astonished, fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, *What shall I do to be saved ?* they do not reproach him with self-righteousness, but make known joyful tidings, as the only means of relief to a despairing guilty sinner, *Believe in*

^f Psal. cxlvii. 3.

^g Acts ii. 37, 38.

the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house^h. *

‘ Such is the view I entertain of those convictions produced in the conscience by the law of God, which worketh wrath ; but whenever people begin to imagine, that there is some sort of merit in their convictions, prayers and tears ; that their state is safe, because they are convinced and humbled ; or that their hope depends on seeing their past guilt in a less formidable point of view, and resolving in future to amend their ways, they set themselves in direct opposition to the gospel ground of hope, and thus become self-righteous. But is not this the most pitiful ground of hope that could well be imagined ? Is it not strange indeed that men should thus boast of their convictions ? We are naturally dis-

^h Acts xvi. 30, 31, 32.

* I do not at all mean to insinuate, that *a convicted sinner*, or indeed any man in the world, is free of a desire to establish his own righteousness, while ignorant of the way of peace revealed in the gospel ; but when we begin to distinguish characters, it must require something more than this, to denominate a man *self-righteous in comparison of others* ; and surely conviction of sin is none of the things by which this character is marked out. Many of those Jews to whom Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, were, no doubt, men who gloried in their own worth ; but was their self-righteous pride increased by their being “ pricked in their hearts,” and forced to cry out, “ What shall we do ? ” It would be absurd to say so. They were then humbled to the dust, and fully persuaded that they had no claim to the favour of God, on account of the things in which they formerly boasted ; and that *they*, above all others, had reason to fear the just indignation of God, as being the murderers of his beloved Son, and as “ God had made that same Jesus, *whom they had crucified*, both Lord and Christ.”

posed to be proud of knowledge ; yet surely, knowing that we are sinners, should have no effect but to humble and abase us. Can a man deserve eternal life, because he confesses that he is worthy of death ? Is it not beyond measure inconsistent for such a one to plead any thing but mercy ? It may be said, perhaps, that one who confesses his sins, is not such a hardened sinner as those who deny them ; but what shall we say of his humility, if he so inverts the nature of things, as to build his hope of obtaining favour upon his conviction of those very sins, which are the cause of his condemnation, and ought only to fill him with shame and self-abhorrence ?

‘ There are, perhaps, few more hardened sinners in the sight of God, however decent they may be in the eyes of men, than those who thus boast of their humility. They are even more inconsistent than the ancient Pharisees, for a humble confession of sins was none of those things on which they founded their hope : they, on the contrary, *thanked God that they were not as other men*, which, if true, was surely a more rational footing to proceed upon than the method pursued by those corrupters of the gospel, who own *that they are as other men*, and by virtue of this acknowledgment think themselves entitled to mercy. It is therefore evident, that those who lay any stress in this way upon contrition and godly sorrow, know nothing at all about the matter.

‘ A man truly convinced of sin, sees nothing between him and everlasting destruction, but the sovereign mercy of God manifested to guilty sinners in the atonement of Christ. When this sure foundation which God hath laid in Sion presents itself to his view ; when he sees that Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth, and that he hath redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of all his sins,

no reason can strike his mind why he should then be anxious to conceal his guilt. He will confess it fully to the glory of that grace by which he is saved: he will confess his sins without reserve unto Him who is faithful and just to forgive him his sins, and to cleanse him from all unrighteousness. Is not this a motive to repentance and godly sorrow, far more powerful than any other? Will not he who thus sees himself redeemed by the blood of Christ, be led to hate those sins which were the cause of the sufferings of the Son of God? Conscious that he lives by mercy, will it not be his daily employment to "come boldly to the throne of grace, that he may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need?" How then can such a person make light of repentance, devotion and prayer?

The reason why God is so often represented in Scripture as delighting in a broken and contrite spiritⁱ, dwelling with such^j, and giving grace to the humble^k, is because those who are thus contrite and humble see nothing in themselves in which they can glory, and have all their hope in the blood of atonement; so that his dwelling with those who are humble and of a contrite spirit, is just the same with his taking pleasure in them that hope in his mercy. Nothing could be more absurd than to suppose it a meritorious thing to hope in free sovereign mercy, to which we have no claim or title; and it is equally so to imagine, that the deepest convictions of sin are any otherwise well-pleasing to God, than as they flow from a sense of his forgiving mercy, and lead us to have all our confidence in that grace which reigneth through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. This is the true grace of God

i Psal. xxxiv. 18. and lvii. 15. j John xv. 17. k 1 Pet. v. 5.

wherein we stand. May the Lord reveal it unto many, and fill them with deep repentance and godly sorrow, for the opposition they have shown to its freedom and sovereignty, manifested in saving the chief of sinners!

‘ From the foregoing account of our principles, and these answers to objections, it will be evident to all who judge according to the word of God, that we regard the glorious gospel of Christ, not only as it gives peace with God, and delivers from the wrath to come, but as it produces in all who believe it, the deepest repentance and self-abasement, love to God, obedience to his commandments, and a strict attention to devotional duties. We cannot therefore justly be suspected of having any principle that would lead us to treat with indifference or contempt the convictions of awakened sinners, the experiences of the people of God, or zeal for the interests of practical godliness.

‘ We indeed most peremptorily deny, that the hope of any one who believes the gospel is founded upon such things. The most experienced Christian, after all he has enjoyed, and suffered, and obeyed, has nothing else to look to for pardon and peace, but the same glad tidings which are declared to all mankind without exception, and in which he at first rejoiced when on the brink of everlasting destruction. The hope of the gospel, which strengthens, animates, and enlivens his soul, is the same which “is preached to every creature who is under heaven¹.” It was thus with the apostle Paul: after all his labours, afflictions, and unwearied diligence in the service of Christ for many years; and though he had much experience of the love of God, patience in tribu-

lation, and the joyful hope of eternal glory ; yet neither his experience nor his labours are mentioned by him as constituting any part of the foundation of his hope towards God. In the most solemn manner he disclaims every thing else but the blood of atonement, when he says, “ *God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ^m*. And to the believing Hebrews he thus writes, *We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the BEGINNING OF OUR CONFIDENCE stedfast unto the endⁿ*.

Yet we maintain, with equal firmness, that no man can be a Christian, unless he is convinced of the evil of sin, the need he has of pardon, and the sufficiency of the blood of Christ for this purpose, leading him daily to approach unto God, *confessing his sins unto him who is faithful and just to forgive him his sins, and to cleanse him from all unrighteousness^o*. Neither can any man be a Christian, unless he experiences, in some measure, the love of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit, and lives by the faith of Jesus Christ, looking for his second and glorious appearing.

‘ As the necessary effect of these enjoyments, a Christian is one who overcometh the world through the faith of the Son of God^p: he places his chief delight in the enjoyment of God, and makes every thing else subservient to this his main pursuit. It is his firm belief, that “ one thing is needful, and he hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from him^q.” He gives a decided preference to the blessings of the kingdom of heaven, the service of Christ, and even suffering with him here, in the prospect of future blessedness,

m Gal. vi. 14.

n Heb. iii. 14.

o 1 John i. 9.

p 1 John v. 4, 5.

q Luke x. 42.

when laid in the balance with all the riches, honours, and pleasures of this life. He is like-minded with the apostle Paul who said, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may win Christ^r," &c. Here is an example of the true spirit of Christianity, which must appear in every believer of the gospel, regulating the whole of his conduct. Being risen with Christ, "he seeks those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God: setting his affection on things above, not on things on the earth^s."

'The hearts of the disciples of Jesus, being thus set on obtaining the heavenly inheritance, and raised above the perishing things of time, their chief concern is to preserve upon their spirits a lively sense of the importance of eternal things, and to stand fast in the faith amidst all the opposition they meet with from the world around them, and from their own deceitful wicked hearts. They are careful to avoid every thing that would interrupt their communion with God, and "grieve his Holy Spirit, whereby they are sealed to the day of redemption^t." But they are sensible of much weakness, and many short-comings in their duty, and are fully persuaded that they can only "work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, when God worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure^u." This leads them continually to have recourse unto him for that grace and strength which they stand in need of; to

r Phil. iii. 7—15.

s Col. iii. 1, 2.

t Eph. iv. 30.

u Phil. ii. 12, 13.

“pray always, with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and to watch thereunto with all perseverance^v.” Thus Jude exhorts those to whom he wrote, as an antidote against the dangers to which they were exposed, particularly from ungodly teachers, who corrupted the gospel of Christ: “But ye, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life^w.”

‘These are Christian exercises, which require all the vigilance, exertion, and activity, of which the human mind is capable; and those only who are thus employed, by the animating influence of the faith and hope of the gospel, deserve the name of Christians. Believers of the truth are represented in Scripture, as *fighting the good fight of faith^x, running with patience the race that is set before them^y, and striving for the mastery^z*; which surely implies, that their whole heart and soul is engaged in the religion of Christ, and that every thing else must give way to this grand object of their pursuit, the *unfading inheritance, the incorruptible crown*. Accordingly we find, that he who would run the Christian race, must “lay aside *every weight*, and the sin which doth so easily beset him^a.” He must “keep under his body, and bring it into subjection, lest he should be cast away^b :” and he who would strive, so as to overcome, and obtain the crown, must *strive lawfully^c, and be temperate in all things^d*.

In prosecuting this warfare, much experience is obtained by the disciples of Christ, both of their own ig-

v Eph. vi. 18.

w Jude, ver. 20, 21.

x 1 Tim. vi. 12.

y Heb. xii. 1.

z 1 Cor. ix. 25.

a Heb. xii. 1.

b 1 Cor. ix. 27.

c 2 Tim. ii. 5.

d 1 Cor. ix. 25.

norance, weakness, ingratitude, and rebellion ; and of the Lord's infinite mercy in forgiving their sins, and of his almighty power in establishing their souls, and making them conquerors over all their enemies.

‘ A great part of the New Testament is taken up in giving us an account of the experience of the apostles, and those who obtained like precious faith with them. It is of the utmost consequence to attend to this ; for real believers of the truth are more distinguished from hypocrites and false professors, by the effects which the word of God produces in their hearts and conduct, than by any difference in their faith or knowledge ; and it is thus that the Scripture guards men against self-deception, for it supposes that those who fall away may be enlightened^e ; that they may have known the way of righteousness^f ; nay, that at first they might receive the word with joy^g :” and it gives us no infallible criterion, whereby we may know that our faith is genuine, but our experience of its power to convince and humble us, to give us full relief and permanent joy, and to make us bring forth the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ to the glory and praise of God.

‘ Thus Paul gives an account of the experience of the Thessalonians, when he says, “ Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Spirit, and in much assurance^h.” The gospel was not with them a matter of speculation or indifference : it came with power upon their hearts and consciences, while it was attended with the demonstration of the Holy Spirit, making known its import and its evidence ; the consequence of which was, that they firmly believed

^e Heb. vi. 4.

^f 2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.

^g Matt. xiii. 20.

^h 1 Thess. i. 5.

it, for it came unto them *in much assurance*.—This appeared by their “becoming followers of the apostles, and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spiritⁱ.” They found all their happiness in this word: it made them joyful in the midst of sufferings for its sake, which led them cheerfully to become “companions with the apostles in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ^j.” He also says to these Thessalonians, “When ye received the word which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but (as it is in truth) the word of God, *which effectually worketh also in you that believe^k*.” The evidence of this he likewise mentions, which was, their becoming followers of the churches, and suffering persecution for the sake of the truth^l.”

‘Instances of this sort might be multiplied without end, but we must now come to a conclusion. In general we may observe, that the history given us of the first Christians in the New Testament, is a description not of earthly, but of heavenly men. They were converted by the power of the word of God: they were born again by this incorruptible word^m, and actuated by motives, hopes and principles, entirely new, and opposite to those which influenced their conduct when they knew not God. They were men under the lively impressions of eternal things, and “had their conversation in heaven, from whence they looked for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christⁿ.” Though burdened with a sense of sin, and groaning to be delivered^o, they were assured of their interest in Christ, and joyful beyond expression,

i 1 Thess. i. 6.

j Rev. i. 9.

k 1 Thess. ii. 13.

l 1 Thess. ii. 14.

m 1 Pet. i. 23.

n Phil. iii. 20.

o Rom. vii. 23. 1 Cor. v. 2. 4.

even in a state of suffering and distress ; for it is said concerning them, that “ though they were in heaviness through manifold temptations, they rejoiced in Jesus Christ, with joy unspeakable and full of glory^p.” They were happy without any outward visible cause, nay, in such a situation as would have made all men miserable but themselves.

‘ This account of Christian experience will no doubt differ very considerably from the views of many professors of religion in our day, some of whom pay little attention in any way to experimental Christianity, and others think that nothing deserves the name of experience, but those deep exercises of mind, which keep them always in darkness and perplexity, refusing the comfort which the gospel affords to the most trembling guilty sinner, and labouring to obtain relief by means of their repentance, devotion, or some good thing towards God, which they expect to find in themselves. They cannot think of coming to Christ, guilty as they are, but must be prepared and qualified for receiving him ; and so they labour all their life-time to obtain an interest in Christ, “ ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.” These are the persons who are esteemed by many the most experienced Christians ; yet they seem more to resemble the Israelites on Mount Sinai, than those who “ are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem^q ;” for these last “ have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby they cry unto God, Abba, Father^r.”

‘ It may be thought that the account here given of Christian experience carries it too high, that the situa-

^p 1 Pet. i. 6. 8.

^q Heb. xii. 18. 22.

^r Rom. viii. 15.

tion of the first Christians was some way different in this respect from ours, and that such comforts cannot now be enjoyed by them that believe. But where is the difference? Is not the gospel the same in all ages? Doth it not present to the view of Christians now, the same object of hope that filled the hearts of these ancient believers with such unspeakable joy? And must not the truth, when it is really believed, produce the same effects now, that it did in the days of the apostles? Christians may depart from God, and lose their relish for the gospel, and their enjoyment of that blessed hope which it reveals: they may become lukewarm, and leave their first love, even while they continue strict in their outward conduct^s; and in so far as this is the case, till they again become zealous and repent, they cannot be free of the spirit of bondage. But those who are habitually in this state of mind, have reason to fear that they are not Christians at all; and that if they continue *lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, Christ will spue them out of his mouth*^t.

‘ Let all, therefore, who wish to enjoy true Christian experience, carefully peruse the New Testament, and observe what were the effects produced by the word of truth on those who first believed it. Let them examine their own hearts and conduct, as in the sight of God, before whose judgment-seat they must soon appear, and see if the gospel has produced the *same effects* on them, and if they are now living by the faith of the Son of God, and acting as his faithful servants. Thus shall they be able to determine whether they are believers of the *same truth*, or empty, formal, and hypocritical professors of the name of Christ.’

^s Rev. ii. 2, 3, 4.

^t Rev. iii. 15, 16.

I SHALL now conclude this publication, earnestly entreating all sorts of men to consider their situation in the same point of view as the word of God represents it, and as it shall soon appear at the judgment-seat of Christ; and in this accepted time and day of salvation, not to harden their hearts, but approach to that Lord who is rich in mercy to all that call upon him.

I am, &c.

EDINBURGH, Nov. 5. 1785.

A P P E N D I X.

Nº. I.

HYMN SUNG ON THE SCAFFOLD.

'Tis finished! the Saviour cry'd,
When on the cross he bow'd and died :
'Tis finished! all heaven resounds ;
Th' Eternal's mercy knows no bounds !—

Let's catch, my friends, the heav'nly theme,
'Tis finished! let us proclaim :
Justice divine is now appeas'd,
God rests in his own Son well pleas'd.

'Tis finished! Ye nations hear,
Your fruitless labour now forbear ;
By Jesus' finish'd work alone,
There's access to God's holy throne.

'Tis finished! The work is done
By God's own well-beloved Son :
His work most perfect is, and pure,
And shall eternally endure.

'Tis finished! The Lamb, once slain,
Is from the dead rais'd up again ;
He hath ascended up on high,
And captive led captivity.

'Tis finished! Now we may sing,
Devouring Death ! where is thy sting ?
O grave ! where is thy victory ?
Here's life and immortality !

'Tis finished! Here's food for praise,
Here's subject meet for heav'nly lays :
And God's redeem'd shall ever sing,
The praises of th' Eternal King.

Then let us still with thankful voice,
In Jesus' finish'd work rejoice ;
'Tis finished! Let us proclaim,
Eternal thanks to God's great name.

N^o. II.

The Last Speech, Confession, and Dying Words, of WILLIAM MILLS, who was executed at Edinburgh, on Wednesday the 21st day of September 1785, for the Crime of House-breaking.

I WILLIAM MILLS, aged about thirty-two years, was born in the shire of Aberdeen, of honest parents, who brought me up, while I remained with them, in a sober way ; but my inclination being to travel, I left them when very young, and went through many countries in the military line, in which I met with more encouragement than I could have expected. I was reputed an honest man, and sustained a fair character, till about three years ago, being reduced to poverty by the non-payment of different sums of money due to me, led aside by ill company, and, above all, by my own desperately wicked and deceitful heart, I followed a course of life the most openly sinful and profane, and went on from evil to worse, till I was at last left so far to myself, as to commit the crime for which I am condemned ; and condemned justly, for I receive the due reward of my deeds. But though, till lately, I could not have been condemned by the laws of men, I see myself all along a breaker of the law of God, as it requires perfect love to God and our neighbour, Matt. xxii. 37. 39. I see myself to have been a wilful transgressor of both these commandments, and all my sins, in this respect, appear to me very dark and dismal, and now very evil in my sight.

After I was condemned, I was struck with horror from a sense of my dismal state, labouring under a

dreadful weight, and at the point of despair through a view of the greatness of my sins. In this situation, I was visited by some persons who, I do not doubt, meant well. I informed them that I was very much disturbed, and felt a great weight at my heart, and wanted to prepare myself for another world; and that I could not get myself made easy by prayer, mourning over my sins, and all my attempts to please God. They told me they were very glad that I felt myself uneasy for my sins, and desired me to be busy with God, and use all my endeavours to make peace for myself with him; but I still continued very uneasy, for no prayers or tears of mine could atone for one single sin, let be so many. In this state I remained, so anxious to make my heart better, that I would willingly have plucked it out of my bowels, if this would have answered the purpose, and rendered me an object worthy of pardon. But all my attempts were vain, till God was pleased so to order it, that a certain person came to see me. He asked me how I found myself? I answered, that I was endeavouring to work a very hard work, for I felt a great load at my heart. He replied, It is a very hard work indeed, if you be working any thing to make atonement for your sins. That work is done already: it is finished by Jesus Christ; and whosoever believes in this shall be saved. For proof of this, he marked down many passages of Scripture, and desired me to mind God's word and not man's.

Even when I first heard this, I was somewhat eased in my mind; but when, after examining the Scriptures, I found it to be just and true, I was so much eased of the burden at my heart, that it was almost new life unto me. Now I rejoice when I find it written, John iii. 16. that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only be-

gotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." And I account it "a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." So I see that God gave his Son freely to die for our sins, because there was no other ransom could satisfy his justice, and sore provoked anger: so vile were we, and full of sin, that it was necessary that God himself should be manifest in the flesh, being born of a Virgin, and by his death on the cross, suffer for us. Thus Isaiah says, ch. liii. 5. "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." See the whole chapter. And in John, chapter xix. we have an account of his sufferings, sufferings far beyond my power to describe, but in particular at the 30th verse, "When Jesus had received the vinegar, he said, It is finished: and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost." Now, it was from *this very word* that I at first took all my joy, for I am assured that he hath completed all salvation for the guilty, and God hath confirmed this by raising him from the dead, and committing unto him all judgment.—I am also assured, that "whosoever believeth on him shall not perish;" and therefore, though I am a great sinner, though I acknowledge myself to be one of the chief of sinners, yet I find I have no room for despair, nor am I locked up from God's grace, though I be chained in bars of iron. The scene before me indeed is solemn: I am just going to launch into eternity, and to face that great and terrible God against whom I have sinned, and Jesus sitting at his right hand, who is able to save and to destroy. The change will be great, and the very thought of it is so affecting, that it must long ere now

have deprived me of my senses, had not God, who is rich in mercy, opened mine eyes by his word and Spirit, to see his glory as revealed in the gospel; that he is the just God and the Saviour; and that even such a wretch as I, am fully warranted to hope in his mercy. This, and this alone, gives strength and consolation to my soul. I go to Christ my Lord and Saviour, to his judgment-seat who died upon the cross for sinners: to him I commit my cause, to him I look for salvation.

I am also encouraged to hope in the mercy of God, from the many instances recorded in the Scriptures of the salvation of great sinners, such as Mary Magdalene, Zaccheus, the jailor at Philippi, and, above all, the thief on the cross, which so exactly applies to my case, that it gives me a great deal of comfort. Thus, when I consider the goodness of Christ, I love him: this leads me to call on his name, and to wish I could do any thing to serve him or his people; and indeed it is only through the knowledge of him that all true love arises either to God or man. When I ponder in my mind what is recorded of the woman who kissed the feet of Jesus, washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head, and what the Lord said about this to Simon the Pharisee, I admire the grace of the Saviour. I wish it were in my power to kiss his feet: with what joy and transport could I wash them with my tears, and wipe them with the hairs of my head! But why should I say so? the blessed Jesus needs none of my washing. It is I, a poor polluted sinner, that need to be washed, and I praise and magnify his name that he hath washed my soul in his most precious blood.

Now this is the confession of my faith and hope, which I am persuaded none who regard the Bible will disapprove of, seeing I have received so much comfort from

it, and given God's own word for the truth of all that I have said ; and it is my earnest desire, that all who see this, may examine the ground of my confidence, and apply to this my remedy, which will never fail.

To conclude, I die in peace with all men, heartily forgiving all who have injured me, and asking forgiveness from all whom I have injured. I also return my hearty thanks to my lawyers and agent, for their disinterested zeal in my service ; and also to the captain of the tolbooth, and the inner-jailor, who, while they were very strict and exact in their duty, behaved to me with kindness and compassion. But, above all, I return thanks to those who were instrumental, by the grace of God, in enlightening my mind in the knowledge of the Scriptures ; and as I cannot express what service they have done me, I leave it to the Lord to recompense them, knowing that for his sake they shewed me kindness.

And now, O Lord Jesus, I turn to thee. **THESE ARE MY LAST WORDS.** *Remember me, now that thou art in thy kingdom, and be merciful to me this day, as thou wast to the thief who called to thee on the cross, and grant that my soul may be with thee in paradise, that I may be blessed in the enjoyment of thee to all eternity. Amen*.*

WILLIAM MILLS.

* It may be proper to observe, that the writer of the foregoing Letters received from William Mills, a few days before he died, the Speech he intended to be published, written with his own hand, in order to correct any inaccuracy, and leave out any repetition of sentiment. The above speech contains the substance of what was thus received from him ; not only the ideas being exactly preserved, but as much as possible his own words being

retained. This Speech was examined by William Mills, and signed by him before it was printed ; and so anxious was he that his own Speech should go abroad into the world, that he instructed the jailor to apply for an interdict against all the printers, except the person employed by him ; and he read over the Speech after it was printed, on the day that he suffered, that he might be fully satisfied that no mistake was committed.

A

LETTER

TO THE

SIX MEN PRESENTLY UNDER SENTENCE OF DEATH
IN THE TOLBOOTH OF EDINBURGH.

MY POOR UNHAPPY FRIENDS,

Edinburgh, April 22. 1783.

ALLOW a fellow sinner to put you, who have now lost all hope of retrieving matters in this world, in mind of a few things which belong to your everlasting peace, before they also are hid for ever from your eyes.

My intention in thus addressing you, is not so much to set before you the heinous nature of these particular crimes for which you are condemned by a human tribunal, as to speak to you as sinners *in general* in the sight of God, and so liable to that eternal death, which is the reward of every soul that doeth evil, and to lay before you the ground of hope which the gospel, or glad tidings, makes known to unprepared and unqualified sinners, such as you.

You are condemned by your fellow-men for breaking the good order and peace of human society. I believe you are guilty of the crimes for which you are condemned, and your own consciences will testify that you are

so. But many men in your situation have appeared very penitent for the particular crime against human laws for which they suffered, without ever duly considering the bitter fountain from which these corrupt streams flowed, or that they had in that, and in innumerable instances, sinned against God, and done evil in his sight^a.

You and I, my friends, in common with all mankind, were shapen in sin, and conceived in iniquity^b. By the fall of the first man Adam, we became subject to death, disease, and pain, as the punishment and consequence of his offence^c. We were born into this world with corrupt hearts, at enmity against God, and fitted to sin and revolt against him. In fine, we were by nature children of wrath^d. Every evil word we speak, and every wicked work we perform, is the native and necessary consequence of our sinful and polluted natures; for say the Scriptures, "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies^e." And the works of the flesh, or of the natural man, are said to be, "Adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like^f."

You, my unhappy friends, though not more guilty in the sight of God, than those who have exceeded in other particulars of the lusts of the flesh, have been tempted to abound in that species of them, which have, by the just judgment of men, brought about your untimely

a Psal. li. 4. b Psal. li. 5. c Gen. iii. 17, 18, 19.
 Rom. v. 12, 13, 14, 15. 18, 19. d Eph. ii. 1, 2, 3. e Matt.
 xv. 19. f Gal. v. 19, 20, 21.

end. But think not that this is the worst: rather consider, that if he does not pass unpunished who offends against human laws, how shall he escape who trespasses against the divine? You and I, my friends, and all the human race, have, in innumerable instances, offended against the law of God^g, and so fall under its curse in the life to come; for the Scriptures say, “For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them^h.” Now we are toldⁱ, that the law requires perfect love to God and to our neighbour; and in this view also respects not only our outward actions, but our inmost thoughts^j. Who then of all the human race can put his hand to his heart, and say he is clean? In this view, the revered judge who passes sentence, and the trembling criminal at the bar are equally guilty, and equally condemned. You will now ask me, How then are sinful men to be saved? I would answer you in a word, entirely by the atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ, believed in as the foundation of all hope and comfort^k. But then, Is there no hope in the gospel for such as you? Far be the thought from my heart; for if so, I myself could have none. Hear the astonishing love of God to a sinful and perishing world: “He so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that *whosoever* believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life^l.” This Person, who is of infinite dignity, being no

g Rom iii. from the 9th to 21st verse.

h Gal. iii. 10.

i Matt. xxii. 37. 39.

j Matt. v. throughout. Heb. iv. 12.

k Rom. iii. 24—28. Chap. iv. 4—6. Rom. x. from beginning to end. Gal. iii. 13, 14. Eph. ii. 4—10. Acts xv. 11. Chap. xvi. 31.

l John iii. 16.

less than God, the Creator of all things, manifest in human flesh^m, came into this world to save sinners, and of such the chiefⁿ. He saved them by bearing the punishment of their sins on the cross in their stead^o, and thus making reconciliation or atonement for the sins of the people^p; by so doing, he satisfied the justice of an offended God, which must either take vengeance on the sinner, or a substitute^q, and all the demands of his law, both as it requires satisfaction for past offences, and perfect and complete obedience. For when he was suspended on the accursed tree, he poured out his soul unto death for transgressors, and by this self-denied act of obedience to God, and perfect love to the souls of men, he fulfilled the law, which requires, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and strength, and thy neighbour as thyself^r." In this perfect atonement, God is well pleased. Twice did he bear testimony to his satisfaction in this sacrifice, before it was offered up, by an audible voice from heaven^s; and in further testimony of this, he has raised him from the dead, and given him glory at his own right hand^t: thus manifesting to all, in the risen Jesus, that divine wrath is appeased, having found a boundary beyond which it could not pass. Thus, my friends, though no man will be found to suffer in your stead the punishment of the breach of human laws, consider with admiration the astonishing grace—your Creator himself, clothed in human flesh, has, in the room of an innumerable multitude,

in John i. 1—15. Acts xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 16.
 Heb. i. throughout. Rev. i. throughout. n 1 Tim. i. 15.
 o Isa. liii. throughout. p Heb. ii. 16, 17. q Rom. iii.
 25, 26. r Matt. v. 17. Gal. iii. 13. s Matt. iii. 17.
 Chap. xvii. 5. 2 Peter i. 16—18. t 1 Peter i. 21.

(among which, if you believe, you are included), suffered the punishment due to the breach of the law of God. He came not to save, in distinction from the worthless, men of honourable, regular and pious characters. He came to save the profligate, the wretched, the miserable; such as are accounted, by the voice of their fellow-sinners, unworthy to live. It was great sinners he came to save; and, as he himself says, "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance". No preparation of your hearts, or amendment of your lives, is previously required in order to fit and qualify you for the reception or enjoyment of this grace. He saves men just as they stand, if they believe the glad tidings, or gospel, I have just been declaring. Hear what the Scriptures say, "Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness". And with this agrees the commission which Christ gave to his apostles, "Go ye into all the *world*, and preach the gospel to every *creature*: he that *believeth*, and is baptized, shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned". From these two passages, we find that every creature, however miserable, guilty and wretched his condition, is warranted at the first to have hope from the gospel, and that simply by crediting its truth, or believing it upon the testimony of God, without either ceasing to be, or to view himself in any other light than an ungodly sinner, and without working or attempting to make himself better. Consider the gracious call of God, "Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righte-

u Matt. ix. 13.

v Rom. iv. 4, 5. also ch. xi. 5, 6.

w Mark xvi. 15, 16.

ousness : I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry^x." Think upon the many striking instances in the New Testament, of the utterly worthless obtaining mercy : Zaccheus the publican^y ; the woman that was a sinner^z ; the Jews who embrued their hands in the blood of Jesus^a ; the Corinthians, who appear to have been guilty of all manner of wickedness^b ; the thief upon the cross^c, which is a case full to my purpose when addressing you ; and the apostle Paul, that noted enemy to the cross of Christ, who also, that the benefit of his obtaining mercy may remain to the latest posterity, gives this reason for it, " Howbeit, for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first, Jesus Christ might shew forth all long-suffering, for a pattern to them who should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting^d." In these instances, and in innumerable others which might be mentioned, we see the absolute freedom of the grace of God, and that salvation is not unto him that worketh in any way, or under any pretext, but unto him who, conscious of nothing about himself, but what marks him out as an ungodly object of the displeasure of his Maker, " believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly," or simply credits the gospel testimony of salvation to the most guilty through Jesus Christ.

Let me beseech you, my friends, to think on these things. If you credit these good news, not only shall all your sins be blotted out, but you will live eternally in the presence of God. But why should I say that I beseech you ? God himself beseeches you to be recon-

x Isa. xlvi. 12, 13. y Luke xix. 1—11. z Luke vii.
36. to the end. a Acts ii. throughout. b 1 Cor. vi. 9—12.
c Luke xxiii. 39—44. d 1 Tim. i. 16.

ciled to him ; for, say the apostles, “ As though God did beseech * by us, we pray in Christ’s stead be ye reconciled to God ; for he hath made him to be sin (or a sin-offering) for us who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him^e.” See to the same purpose the lvth chapter of Isaiah, where the misery of men, the freedom of salvation, and the tender concern of God for the souls of men, are most beautifully and fully set forth. Oh ! then, even at the eleventh hour, fly for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before you, and you shall be as happy and blessed as they who have borne the burden and heat of the day^f.

And now, my friends, to conclude, I doubt not but that some who see you may set before you a different scheme, and press you to prepare your hearts for the proper reception of God’s grace. All I shall say is, I am sure I have set before you the words of truth and soberness, and I beseech you in a matter of such infinite importance to your immortal souls, to search the Scriptures for yourselves, for in them are the words of eternal life, and bring the opinions of all men to that unerring test. And while you search the word of the living God, be unawed by any false scheme of religion, however venerable it may appear from the characters of its defenders, and “ cease to hear that instruction which

* The supplementary *you* in this passage destroys the true meaning of it. The supplement ought to be *men*, or the *world* ; for the apostle is here declaring the embassy which he and his fellow-apostles had to the world, and what was the language of it ; and this he distinguishes from their ministry in the churches of Christ, which he proceeds to speak of in the beginning of next chapter, ver. 1, 2.

e 2 Cor. v. 20, 21,

f Heb. vi. 18. Matt. xx. 1—17.

causeth to err from the words of knowledge^g;" for most deeply important it is for us all to be well informed about the most serious of all questions, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God^h?" And now, my friends, that you may believe the glad tidings, and that they may comfort your hearts when heart and flesh fainteth and faileth, is the sincere wish and fervent prayer of one who is, with tender sympathy, your real friend and well-wisher, and who, having no particular reason either for publishing or concealing his name, shall subscribe himself at present,

A Follower of the inspired Fishermen of Galilee.

^g Prov. xix. 27.

^h Micah vi. 6.

LETTER

TO A

GENTLEMAN IN EDINBURGH;

*Containing some Account of JAMES ANDREWS, Recruit
in the 61st Regiment, who was executed for Robbery.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,

Edinburgh, Feb. 9. 1784.

AT your desire, I send you a few hints about that poor man who was executed on Wednesday last. I shall be extremely happy if they prove any way useful. My only objection against complying with your request was, That I could have wished that his appearance had been more striking than it was ; for others cannot make the allowances that I can, who saw his whole behaviour in private as well as public, and who can certify both the deep conviction he had of sin and its consequences, and the great timidity of temper which appeared to be natural to him, so that I am convinced that but for the hope of the gospel, his dreadful fear of the divine wrath, joined with the weakness of his mind, must have sunk him in despair. Any confidence he had then, I am persuaded, was entirely owing to his faith in the gospel, and neither owing to want of concern, or to natural courage.

The first time I saw him, was exactly eight days before he suffered, just a few minutes after it had been announced to him that he was to get no reprieve. He was overwhelmed with grief, arising from this cruel disappointment, for, till I saw him, he had entertained no idea that he was to die. I said a few things to him on the guilty situation of men, and the foundation that the gospel exhibited of hope and comfort to the guilty, unprepared and unqualified as they stood, and left him a copy of the letter to the six men lately under sentence of death. Being taken ill that day, I saw him not again till the Monday before he suffered. I found him in extreme horror and agony of mind, from the fear of the wrath of God, and what was to befall him after death. Like the jailor at Philippi, he trembled, and, like the Jews, exclaimed, *What shall I do?* I then set before him, from a variety of passages of Scripture, the gospel as bringing salvation to the utterly worthless; shewed how Christ came to save sinners, even the chief; that Emmanuel, God manifested in the flesh, had died for the sins of the worthless, was wounded for their transgressions, bore the curse of the law, even the wrath and curse of God due to men for sin; that God the Father, who appointed the atonement, was well pleased in it, in demonstration of which, he had raised Jesus Christ from the dead; and that, through this Man was preached to the greatest sinners the remission of sins, and that guilty men were interested in, and saved by this gospel, not in the way of any good thoughts or deeds of theirs, but just believing the truth on the testimony of God, *believing on him that justifieth the ungodly*: and I concluded with setting before him many instances of the chief of sinners actually obtaining mercy, such as the woman that was a sinner, Zaccheus

the publican, the Jews, the Corinthians, the thief on the cross, and Paul. I particularly insisted on two things, and often repeated them; the one, the perfection of Christ's atonement; the other, the way in which sinners are saved by it, simply by believing; and that it was suited to fill the most guilty, dark and desponding mind, with immediate joy and peace. I was happy to see the immediate effect of the word—he raised his drooping head, seemed surprised—he appeared like one who thought his salvation possible.

I left him, and saw him again on Tuesday. I was quite struck with the alteration on him. He told me he was quite happy. I asked the ground of this: He told me, that the things I had said to him the day before, had produced a change in his mind that he could not express; that he found, upon searching the Scriptures, that they spoke the same things, and that he saw that the greatest sinners, even outwardly more atrocious than he had been, had obtained mercy, and therefore he hoped in God through the atonement.

— — —, who attended with me upon this poor man, saw him in the evening; he then appeared extremely satisfied in his mind, and spake of the sovereignty of God in shewing him mercy. I also should have mentioned, that he shewed great attention to the Scriptures, and had marked many very suitable places in the New Testament for his reading. On Wednesday morning, I saw him again. He told me, that through the night he had had many struggles with unbelief, but that now again his mind was happy and composed. I asked him, if my attending him to the place of execution would be agreeable to him, for I suspected that modesty alone prevented his requesting this. It was just as I suspected, for he had much desired it, but was

ashamed to ask it:—and I therefore came to him about one o'clock. His spirits were very good, though his body was weak, and his mind also. He spoke most comfortably of the ground of his hope, and prayed twice very fervently in most Scriptural terms. While we walked to the scaffold, his animal spirits appeared much exhausted, and his bodily strength spent; and, at the place of execution, he had nearly fainted, but the word of salvation again appeared to relieve him; and, as the time of his departure drew near, he appeared bolder and bolder, till at last, after he mounted the scaffold, fear seemed to give place to hope, and his prayer indeed appeared to be that of faith, hope and charity. Upon the whole then, I am convinced that in this case we have a fresh instance of Christ's salvation to the chief of sinners; for I can be more certain of nothing of the kind, than that the word of the truth of the gospel alone supported this poor man's mind. He went not indeed to death in all that joyful confidence with which martyrs for the truth have braved death; but then, let it be remembered, that his mind saw the foundation of hope only on the Monday evening before he suffered, and that though all things are possible for God to do, yet we need not be greatly surprised, that a raw convert to the truth, should shrink back from death at first, while we at same time attend to this, that his mind was quieted by the truth, and upon the whole reconciled to death, and happy in the view of it.

You will excuse this hurried scrawl, which I have no time to correct, far less to write over.

I am, my dear friend,
very affectionately yours,

H. D. I.

P. S. Two things I forgot to mention—the one, how much there appeared in him the genuine influence of the truth, in his love to us, for the truth's sake, who attended him. He appeared indeed to be taught of God, as were the Thessalonians, to love the brethren. The other, that no doubt it will surprise people that so little of the gospel is in his speech; but then what occurs to me here is, that even supposing the speech to be his, (which I much doubt, especially from what is there called his last words before he left the prison, none of which he uttered) it is very probable that this speech was delivered to the jailor before his mind was much affected by the truth, considering how immediately before he suffered, this was the case.

LETTER

TO THE

EDITORS

OF THE

MISSIONARY MAGAZINE.

THE Author of the following Letter having sent it to the Editors of the Missionary Magazine, for insertion in the Number for January or February last, it was returned with the following Card, after having been before them about a month :

‘ The Editors of the Missionary Magazine are of opinion, that it would be improper to insert INVESTIGATOR’S Paper without abridging it, from which the writer has precluded them. They are not agreed in regard to some of the strictures it contains, though some of the remarks they very much approve.’

The Editors have not thought proper to condescend on what parts of the Letter they approve of, and what they condemn. The Author never before imagined that they approved of every thing they published in their Magazine, and he is sorry now to understand from such good authority that they do, although it still puzzles him to conceive, how they can agree with both sides of a controversy. This much is certain, that if they approve of the sentiments recommended in the life of Wier, or pant after

a success to the gospel, different from what took place in the apostolic age, when a people, in the midst of nations, were made willing in the day of Christ's power, they must highly reprobate his strictures. The Author, however, is not disposed to bow before the decision of these Editors. He therefore takes the liberty to publish the Letter, as, in his opinion, a very necessary Supplement to the Missionary Magazine for January 1806; and he prints it in the same form, that such of the readers as are of the same mind may, if they please, bind it along with the Magazine.

EDINBURGH, March 3. 1806.

GENTLEMEN,

I OBSERVE in a note upon your last Magazine, viz. for December 1805, a partial resolution against controversy, without any kind of distinction; yet I doubt much the propriety of any such regulation, if those controversies respect things of sufficient importance.—The apostles disputed concerning the faith, and nothing is more hostile to the progress of truth, than that almost equal approbation of truth and error, which is so highly praised by such as would be thought the most liberal-minded Christians.

I trust, however, your resolution does not mean, that you will allow your Magazine to be the vehicle of error, without suffering any correction, lest it may lead to controversy; and in this hope I send you the following free observations.

These observations are chiefly occasioned by *Extracts from the Life of John Lewes Wiesz, a Moravian Missionary*, in the same number; and in the outset, I use

the freedom to remark, that in my humble opinion, your department of religious biography has more need of the pruning-hook than your controversial, for never does error in a more seducing form entwine round the human heart, than when gathered from the lives and opinions of those that are celebrated as eminently pious men.

To attack a Moravian missionary, may by some be considered as a very *antimissionary* attempt, and it will be pleaded, that their fervent religion, and arduous zeal, ought to break the fall of censure on their heads, if not to avert and crush it. So far, however, is this sentiment from staggering me, that I consider the sentiment itself to be of the most delusive nature, and destructive consequences ; to be setting up by law the characters of men against the truth of God ; and to have been an early and eminent mean of settling antichrist upon his highest throne.

I have no wish to lessen in the opinion of any, the zeal and self-denial of the Moravian missionaries ; but I would have this idea to be carefully attended to, that zeal and mortifications do not afford, *of themselves*, any the smallest evidence of the love of the truth ; and can only be valuable when they are engaged and endured for the glorious gospel.

The Pharisees of old, we know from the highest authority, compassed sea and land to make proselytes, and it is a notorious fact, that the Roman Catholic priests have, in many cases, outrun all other missionaries in their deprivations and zeal.

The writer Wicz, giving an account of his infancy and youth, says, ‘ As a child I had a tender love to our Saviour, and when I heard him spoken or sung of, I was oftentimes moved to tears. Whenever I hap-

‘pened to fall into levity, I grew uneasy, and could not
‘rest satisfied till I felt again our Saviour’s pardoning
‘love.’

Speaking of his early youth, he adds, ‘Outward
‘temptations and the allurements of the world, gradu-
‘ally lost their influence over me, and I soon strove
‘earnestly against the commission of sin; but I labour-
‘ed under a sense of condemnation, and of the wrath
‘of God.’

What are we to make of all this? Wiez was either a natural man, or a child of God by faith; if the *first*, what shall we say to his tender love of Christ, his experience of the Saviour’s pardoning love, his overcoming the world and sin. If the *last*, it is equally impossible to comprehend his labouring under a sense of condemnation, and the wrath of God.

Of these suppositions, the *first* is the most dangerous, and unfortunately it is the true one.—It is evident, that Wiez all the while considered himself as unconverted; and therefore all this goes to maintain that most dangerous and delusive doctrine, of the possibility of sinners, by their own exertions, attended by some kind of divine influence, preparing themselves for Christ’s favour, in direct opposition to the apostolic doctrine, “Unto him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

The account that Wiez gives of his conversion, and the means of it, quite agree with these views, and are equally exceptionable. He says, ‘One day I went, with three of my companions, to Halenbeek, to hear the late brother Cunow preach.—He declared, that every one who felt and acknowledged his sins, and wished to be saved from them, might obtain forgive-

'ness, true comfort and help, by the meritorious sufferings and death of Jesus, and would also be enabled by his grace to live a godly life.'

How directly opposite is this to the gospel of Christ preached by the apostles, and now contained in their writings!—They declared all men to be guilty, and whether sensibly affected by this or not, obnoxious to the divine wrath.—They preached the gospel they had received, or the glad tidings concerning Christ, his atonement, and its acceptance, to all kinds of sinners; to Pharisees and publicans, to Jews and Gentiles, to the devout and profane, to those that were alarmed and sunk with fear, and to the stout-hearted and far from righteousness. From none of these situations did they extract one glimpse of hope, while they proclaimed equally to all, "Whosoever believeth on him, shall receive remission of sins." Faith in their testimony they considered as the spring of aught in man that is pleasing to God, that it alone could lead to repentance, to the love of God, and to true holiness.

But what have we now presented to us?—forgiveness, comfort and help, promised to those who feel and acknowledge their sins, and wish to be saved from them. Here is described the previous pious character of the person who is to obtain mercy.

What must be the effect of such doctrine in the minds of those who give ear to it? Must not the obedient disciple sit down to explore, with anxious care, whether he possesses those so highly favoured requisites, which are even powerful to open the gate of heaven? And if his own vain heart, or enthusiastic mind, shall give a verdict in his favour, must he not claim the blessings of the gospel as his due, and his hope be really founded on that righteousness that supports his claim, under what-

ever humbling and evangelical words his sentiments may be clothed or disguised?

It is no answer, but a mere sophistical evasion, to say, that none will trust in Christ, but such as in good earnest judge themselves to be sinners.—This is a self-evident proposition, illustrated by Christ himself, when he says, “They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick;” but would it be a fair deduction from this to maintain, that such as are insensible of their maladies have no occasion for healing aid? or is the sentiment I have admitted the same thing with drawing favourable symptoms, and deriving a ground of consolation, from conviction of sin, and making this our warrant to believe and trust in the Saviour?

Lastly, We see this Moravian missionary committing himself to the most deluding enthusiasm, as to divine guidance. Speaking of his inclination to reside in a settlement of the brethren, and his being upon one occasion at one of those settlements, he says, ‘My heart melted unto tears on this occasion, and I received an assurance that among this people, I should find my heaven upon earth, and be led to live alone for our Saviour.’

But what follows is still more exceptionable:

‘Once, when I was particularly concerned on account of the small number of souls gained for our Saviour in this mission, and it appeared to me as if I spent my strength for nought, I took my text-book, and opened these words: “Do all that is in thine heart, for God is with thee.” I was thereby greatly comforted, and encouraged to continue in this service of our Lord.’

How must the person who duly venerates the sacred Scriptures, and who has the spirit of faith, love, and a sound mind, be shocked at this gross profanation of the

word of God, which is nothing else than converting the sober counsels of divine wisdom into the fantastic and delusive guidance of a species of religious lottery ! Suppose that this missionary had been desirous of doing something extremely wrong, (the supposition is not impossible), would not this text of Scripture have equally justified his fulfilling the desire of his mind ? Suppose he had made, as many do, the Bible his text-book, and opened the place where it is written, that Judas went and hanged himself, or at some of Christ's denunciations against hypocrites and unbelievers, by the same rule of interpretation, he must have been filled with the utmost horror and despair.

I offer no apology for the strength of my language. Were I weak enough to do so, I would throw away the strength of my argument ; for I have no difficulty or scruple in saying, that I know no rite termed *religious*, more profane, more dishonouring to God, and more dangerous to men, than this solemn and deliberate abuse of the holy oracles given us from heaven.

Permit me, before I conclude, to advert to another thing in your last number, which I confess filled me with some surprise, and much concern. I refer to a sentence in the quarterly letter from India, to the Baptist Missionary Society in England. That sentence is the following :

‘ Such, dear brethren, is the actual state of the mission
 ‘ at this time. You see we are still employed, as might
 ‘ be expected, in laying the foundation, rather than raising
 ‘ the superstructure. No powerful families, no whole vil-
 ‘ lages, have yet been conquered : no one god has been
 ‘ trampled upon, and no single idolatrous poojah stopped.
 ‘ Our converts are solitary individuals, one of a city,
 ‘ and two of a family, from different parts of the country.’

Sorry I am to see the ancient, popular and antichristian error, concerning the nature of the kingdom and religion of Jesus Christ, so heartily adopted, and openly avowed by the Baptist missionaries in India. In their estimation, they have done little or nothing in raising the superstructure, unless whole towns or villages have changed their religion, the powerful families of the country leading the way ; unless the idols of the Gentiles have been trampled under foot, and their temples subverted.—What is this but saying, almost without disguise, that they wish, partly at least through the influence of the great and powerful, the Christian religion to be established upon the ruins of the superstitions of India.

If these are the criterions of the gospel flourishing, and such its triumphs, the apostles could boast little of the success of the gospel in their day ; yet they did not scruple to say, “ Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.”

Their converts were strangers and pilgrims, scattered throughout various nations, but who were denominated by them a holy nation, a royal priesthood, and a peculiar people ; who were begotten again to the lively hope of a heavenly inheritance, and rejoiced in Christ with joy unspeakable, and full of glory. See 1 Peter, chap. i. ii.

We see no example, in the whole labours of the apostles, of any heathen god trampled under foot, and temple of idols demolished or shut up ; or of the Christian religion being professed by any community of people, great or small ; and although some great and rich men became subject to the faith of Christ, yet so little had the apostles been taught earnestly to covet, and loudly to glory in such trophies, that they say, “ For you see

your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called. But God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise, and God hath chosen the weak things of this world, to confound things which are mighty ; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are ; that no flesh should glory in his presence."

These striking features of Christ's religion in the apostolic age, were not the expression of its infantile state. No ; they were essential and characteristical features : they revealed and displayed a kingdom not of this world, but spiritual and heavenly, which, to the end of time, must be distinguished from civil society and national worship. The bulk of all nations must be *always* worldly men, and Christianity cannot be adopted by such without being grossly corrupted. Christ speaks of the opposition of the world to his cause and people, as founded on circumstances that cannot change. He says, John xv. 18,—21. " If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own ; but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than the lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you : if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also. But all these things will they do unto you for my name's sake, because they know not him that sent me."

And the Revelation of John points out the patient sufferings of the saints, till the very time of Christ's appearing and kingdom.

It was to be in another period, foretold in the apostolic age, that the professors of Christianity were to deny the good confession of their Master before Pontius Pilate, when they were to rejoice in an universal subjection to the Christian religion, under the patronage and influence of the princes and great men of the earth; and in the fall of the heathen deities and temples before Christianity, established and triumphant. This *earthly* glory was reserved for the age of Constantine, which flattering bishops celebrated as the auspicious era of the fulfilment of ancient prophecy respecting the conversion of the Gentiles, but which too clearly marked the fatal accomplishment of all the prophecies concerning the corruption of the religion of Christ.

I would fain cherish a hope, that the Baptist missionaries in India have rashly expressed a sentiment somewhat beyond the established conviction of their own minds*; but it is not the private thoughts of the heart,

* The intelligence here referred to was also inserted in the Edinburgh Evangelical Magazine for November 1805. The sentence Mr I. animadverts upon was accompanied with the following note:—‘We hope none of our readers will understand these expressions as implying a wish to establish any thing like a *national religion*. The missionaries certainly have not the most distant idea of using force in *trampling* upon the Hindoo gods, or *stopping* the idolatrous poojahs, but by manifestation of the truth to enlighten the minds of men in the knowledge of the true God, by which they would naturally be led to cast their idols to the moles and to the bats, and give up their superstition and idolatry. In proportion as this knowledge prevails, their idolatrous poojahs will no doubt be forsaken and stopped.’

A considerable time has now elapsed since this letter was written, and no attempts have yet been made by these missionaries to set up any establishment of religion, notwithstanding the remarkable success with which it hath pleased God to attend their labours.

EDITOR.

but the language in which ideas are clothed, that can effect either good or evil ; and it is difficult for any degree of candour to presume, that the fond and anxious wishes expressed in the obnoxious sentence, were founded upon no rooted sentiment of the mind.

While I greatly rejoice in the labours of these missionaries, in furnishing the benighted natives of India with the good news of salvation, by their translations of the Holy Scriptures, I do most deeply regret, that their own ideas should be in any measure contaminated with such genuine antichristian leaven.

I have thus, Gentlemen, given you my sentiments upon some subjects of the last importance, with all possible brevity, and at the same time with that freedom which their infinite consequence demands. It is not my opinion, that the cause of Christ, and truth, can be promoted by the concealment or palliation of the errors of those that preach the gospel and kingdom of Jesus. On the contrary, I am bound to subscribe to the intrepid declaration of the great apostle of the Gentiles, " Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed."

And now, Gentlemen, if you think fit to insert this paper in your Magazine, I shall free you from the fear of continued controversy, at least on my part, by declaring that I will make no reply to any answer that may appear.

I am, Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servant,

Edinburgh, Jan. 11. 1806.

INVESTIGATOR.

SHORT NOTES
OF
DISCOURSES,
ON
IMPORTANT AND INTERESTING SUBJECTS.

PREACHED IN
The Baptist Meeting-house
IN EDINBURGH.

SEARCH THE SCRIPTURES.

P R E F A C E.

THE following are, in general, the short notes the Author used in preaching, scarcely at all altered from their original form, as in most of them pretty evidently appears. In some of them indeed, chiefly the last, he has considerably filled up the heads from which he preached, which the united considerations of the importance of the subject, and the little attention paid to it, prompted him to do.

He thought, that such a work might be useful to those who wish to study the Holy Scriptures ; while, at same time, it was far more easy to him than upon a larger scale, and admitted the introduction of a greater variety of subjects.

He has printed, at present, but a few discourses : perhaps he may publish more, upon the same plan, if the present specimen prove acceptable to the lovers of the word of God.

The date is prefixed to the discourse, when it is any way connected with the subject of it.

EDINBURGH, NOV. 1. 1791.

ISAIAH liii. 1.

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?

CONSIDER, 1. The report, and its import.

2. The complaint, and some of the causes influencing the mind of man to reject the gospel, both in the apostolic age and now.

I. *The report, and its import*; the same mentioned Isa. lii. 7. as we see from Rom. x. 15, 16. The prophet here speaks in the name of the first ministers of the word, mentioned chap. lii. 7, 8. This, according to 1 Peter i. 10,—13. All the chapters in this connexion contain the gospel report, and much from them quoted in the New Testament, most of the particulars contained in this 53d chapter. Consider these particulars,

1. The condition of men, as needing salvation. This implied Isa. lii. 7.; set forth Isa. liii. 6.

2. The person who came; see his glorious dignity, Isa. l. 1. &c. lii. 7. liv. 5.

3. His despised and rejected character, Isa. l. 6. lii. 14. liii. 1, 2, 3. which ended in his death as an atoning sacrifice, ver. 4, 5, 6. 10, 11, 12. Every expression to show it substitutional for the guilty: "Wounded for," &c.—"Chastisement of our peace"—"Offering for sin"—"Bearing iniquity."

4. His resurrection, ascension, and dominion. "He was to prolong his days," &c. ver. 10. "To have a portion with the great," &c. "Because he hath poured out his soul unto death," ver. 12. The same set forth, Philip. ii. 9. &c.

5. The way in which sinners are interested in Christ, is by "faith," ver. 1. & 11. See Rom. x. 15, 16, 17. This report is glad tidings proclaimed to all, Isa. lii. 7. & 10.; and we see how it is opposed to all perplexing inquiries about the way of salvation, Rom. x. 6. &c.

II. *Consider the complaint, &c.* Attend to two preliminary remarks :

1. It is indeed true, that the word of God never returns unto him void, Isa. lv. 11. but exactly answers his will, Rom. ix. 14. &c. xi. 5. 1 Peter ii. 7, 8. It requires divine agency to bring men to the knowledge of the truth ; and if this is withheld, men must perish in their sins ; see ver. 1. of this chapter. But then no man ever believed the gospel, because he thought he was elected ; or rejected it, as judging himself reprobated. When men believe, God opens their eyes to see the glory and evidence of the truth ; and when men reject the gospel, there are causes, founded in their ignorance, and deep-rooted principles of disaffection ; high things exalting themselves against the knowledge of God, as well as simple ignorance, John iii. 19, 20. 2 Cor. iv. 4. ; and it is a few of these causes we are to consider. But, before this,

2. We must observe that this complaint, at the first, respected the pure apostolic gospel : if it was corrupted or perverted, things altered much ; see Gal. v. 11. and 1 John iv. 5. In the days of the apostles, the great following of false doctrine is foretold, 2 Peter ii. 1. &c. 2 Tim. iii. 1. &c. and this is set forth in the Revelation as accomplished, Rev. xvii. 1. 15. This complaint will still hold as to the ancient gospel preached by the apostles.

Consider now some of the causes that influenced the Jews to reject the gospel, for they are chiefly in-

tended, John xii. 37, 38. Rom. x. 16. &c. and which still influence men to reject it.

1. Ignorance of their own true character and situation: they thought themselves righteous, and that their carnal birth and external privileges were to avail them in the Messiah's kingdom; see John Baptist's reasoning with them, Matt. iii. 7. &c.—Christ's, John viii. 33. &c. ix. 40, 41.—Paul labours, Rom. iii. to show that they were guilty, see ver. 19. but this they could not bear. This cause still remains. How many are fortified against the gospel by insensibility of their true situation, and dream of some peculiar nearness they have to God, by birth, baptism, country, education, being devoted to God, covenanting, &c.!

2. Which is inseparably connected with this; they were desirous to establish their own righteousness, which arose from ignorance of themselves, and of the true character of God, Rom. ix. 30. and x. 3. The doctrine of the atonement they could not bear, 1 Cor. i. 22. &c. This was not altogether owing to the disgrace attending Christ's death, but in a great measure to men being altogether beholden to it for salvation; and so Paul says, Gal. v. 11. "And I, brethren, if I yet preach circumcision, why do I yet suffer persecution? then is the offence of the cross ceased." This ground of rejection still remains. How few can bear the apostolic gospel they follow a perverted one, teaching them how to make their peace with God.

3. Another cause was, the love of this present world disaffecting them to the truth, as calling men off from a portion here, and from all ungodliness and worldly lusts, 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4. John iii. 19, 20. See the parable of the marriage supper, Luke xiv. 18. &c.; case of the rich young man, Mark x. 17. &c.

4. We may particularly add, the fear of persecution, and loss of character ; this implied in what was said above ; but it merits special consideration, for it led many, and still leads, to stifle convictions about the truth ; see John xii. 42, 43. ; consider Mark viii. 34. &c.

5. Mistaken views of Messiah's kingdom was a leading cause of the stumbling of the Jews, Isa. liii. 2, 3. They expected a mighty earthly prince, and a worldly kingdom ; they would willingly have taken him by force, and made him such a king ; but they had no taste for a kingdom coming with no observation or worldly show, exercised in the hearts and consciences of a willing, but despised and rejected people by the world, from which they were to be visibly distinguished, and expecting no visible glory or establishment till the resurrection of the just. We may see the natural influence of such views of Christ's kingdom on our conceptions of the gospel report, from Matt. xvi. 21. &c. ; and indeed the idea of a kingdom in which earthly power and grandeur obtains, being *his* kingdom who was crucified in weakness, is a monstrous absurdity ; but Christ's kingdom shall ever make an appearance like his own, Isa. xlii. 1; 2, 3. and attachment to it is to be connected with affliction, 2 Tim. i. 8. This ground of disaffection yet remains ; for however ready men are to receive a corrupted gospel, connected with the worldly establishment of Christianity, promulgated by doctors high in station and esteem, and equally dignified by the approbation of the wise, and sanctified by the esteem of the devout ; yet men are just as much as ever disaffected to the ancient gospel of the kingdom of heaven ; their carnal notions of the one disaffect them to the other, and naturally perplex and corrupt their views of doctrine.

6. Veneration for false teachers, and influence of false doctrine ; see Luke xi. 52. ; see the high airs of these teachers, John vii. 47. &c. and the use they made of their credit with the people, Matt. xxvii. 20. Christ speaks in the most plain manner against them and their ways, in Luke xi. and other places. Veneration of false teachers also turned aside many professing Christians from the pure apostolic gospel, whom Paul as little spared, 2 Cor. xi. 13. &c. Gal. i. 6. &c. The New Testament, setting forth the grand apostasy from the Christian faith, shows it should be through Christian teachers, 2 Peter ii. 1. ; and they are described as leading away multitudes. Veneration for the characters of noted opposers of the truth, fortify the minds of many against the clearest light of the Scriptures, about the gospel of Christ ; and thus we may see the great propriety and need of the call of God, connected with the preaching of the gospel, Rev. xiv. 6. &c.

7. Following the dictates of worldly wisdom and carnal reason. This chiefly applies to the Gentiles, though not exclusively, 1 Cor. i. 22, 23.

1. It appeared to the Grecian philosophers, and their votaries, an irrational thing for men to expect salvation through one who was crucified ; and by a teacher who suffered for supposed crimes, to be taught piety and virtue.

2. The hopes of Christians they derided as delusive, Acts xvii. 32. xxvi. 24.

3. A spiritual kingdom among the nations would appear to them contemptible : we see how little Pilate thought of it. The subjects of this kingdom, mean and despised, would be apt to create their disgust, 1 Cor. i. 26. while the dogmatizing of a poor illiterate party, would probably fill with contempt and resentment the

minds of those philosophers who held nothing certain : see the philosophic Gallio, Acts xviii.

4. The laws of Christ they would judge unreasonable ; almsgiving, brotherly love, forgiveness of injuries, contempt of the world, &c.

5. The worship and ordinances of the Christian church they would consider as vulgar, devoid of grandeur and solemnity.

The same prejudices fill the minds of many at this day.

Let all attend to the gospel report : it is true : Isaiah liii. clearly proves it. It is good news suitable to men. No other kingdom but a spiritual one, suits the gospel or the Christian brotherhood.

DANIEL, CHAP. vii.

November 1789.

THIS chapter contains a most important and instructing prophecy, and indeed a summary of most of the prophetic visions contained in this book. We mean to attempt a short illustration of the principal things contained in it, and improve the subject to any obvious ends of confirmation in the faith, and edification.

I. *Consider the prophecy of the four monarchies*, ver. 1—8. and 16, 17. These kings were not single monarchs, but kingdoms ; see Daniel ii. 39.

The 1st of these, is the Assyrian or Babylonish empire ; see Daniel ii. 37, 38.

The 2*d*, the kingdom of the Medes and Persians, Daniel v. 28.

The 3*d*, the Grecian empire : see Daniel viii. 1—8. 20. &c. xi. 2, 3, 4.

The 4*th*, the Roman empire, described particularly ver. 7. ; we see this also described Rev. xiii. 1, 2. As this kingdom was to be diverse from all the former, so it partook of the nature, and conjoined the strength of them all. Rev. xvii. sufficiently and clearly fixes down this last beast to be the Roman empire, where John has a vision of this kingdom in its last state of ten horns, ruled and governed by antichrist, who, in this last state, is himself termed the beast ; see ver. 9. &c. where is described the situation, forms of government, and peculiar character of Rome.

II. *Consider a little more particularly this last monarchy in its last state, as divided ver. 7. of this chapter : see particularly chap. ii. 40—45.*

1. It was to be divided into ten kingdoms. This was actually accomplished in some measure before the Roman emperor was in appearance taken away, and completely after that time ; and they have continued much about that number since, and shall to the end ; see Dan. ii. 44. Politicians and statesmen may be afraid, perhaps, of the universal dominion of one power ; but the balance of power in Europe is directed and determined by an almighty, though invisible hand, Rev. xvii. 12. &c.

2. Thus, “ The kingdom shall be partly strong, and partly broken.” It shall retain part of the strength of the Roman empire in some of these kingdoms, but others shall be weak.

3. “ They shall mingle, but they shall not cleave,”

&c. There shall be much association among them, but they shall not form any one government, or even universal league among themselves. How descriptive are these characters of the kingdoms of Europe, into which the Roman empire was divided !

III. *Let us now consider what is said of the little horn.* By this is set forth the power of antichrist, especially of papal Rome. The same power is in the Revelation, represented by an unchaste woman riding or ruling the Roman empire, in its divided state, nay is set forth as the beast himself in Rev. xvii. inasmuch as the power of the Roman empire was transferred to him ; and so he is termed also in this prophecy, ver. 11. We observed, that ten kings appeared in the Roman empire, before the shadow of a Roman emperor was abolished. They did so near the beginning of the fifth century ; but it was not till towards the end of it, that the last Roman emperor was taken away. Thus the little horn was not formally revealed till that time, ver. 8. 20. 24. ; see Rev. xvii. 10, 11. 2 Thess. ii. 3. &c. This power, in respect of earthly dominion, appeared small ; yet even this was afterwards increased, by subduing three of the first kings, though he still continued, in comparison with many of them, “ a little horn ;” but his dominion and greatness was peculiarly to be spiritual : in this respect he had “ a mouth speaking great things,” and “ his look was more stout than his fellows.”

IV. *Consider the character of the little horn.*

1. We observe, that the style here particularly applies to one individual man, ver. 8. & 20. ; and the same observation may be made from 2 Thess. ii. 3. ; and who

that man is, there can be no doubt of. He was to arise in the Roman empire, after it was divided into ten kingdoms. His seat was to be the city of Rome itself, Rev. xvii. 18. He was to be an ecclesiastical, and in name and pretence a Christian power, not a Pagan and civil government. Daniel speaks of his being "diverse" from the ten kings; and Paul, in 2 Thess. ii. sets him forth as "sitting in the temple of God." We have a further confirmation of this, in one view of antichrist given in Rev. xiii. 11. having horns like a lamb, assuming the appearance of spiritual power; but speaking like a dragon, the symbol of the Roman government in its pagan and persecuting state. It is evident, that all this applies, and only can apply, to the Pope or Bishop of Rome*.

2. We see his character set forth, ver. 25.

1. "And he shall speak great words," &c.; see also Dan. xi. 36. which speaks of Antiochus Epiphanes, king of Syria, the little horn arising among Alexander's successors, Dan. viii. 9. and who was an eminent type of antichrist; consult also 2 Thess. ii. 4. Rev. xvii. 3. And have not the most blasphemous idolatry, the most open invasion of the power and prerogatives of Jesus Christ, and even the assumption of Divine honour and titles, abundantly made good this charge against the Bishop or Pope of Rome?

2. "And shall wear out," &c.; see also Dan. viii. 23, 24. Rev. xvii. 6. The scattering God's people among the nations, and persecuting and destroying them, implied here.

* Some of the above ideas, and even language, I have taken from the Discourses of Hurd on the Prophecies about Papal Rome.

3. "And think to change," &c. see 2 Thess. ii. 4. setting aside God's commands, and establishing his own traditions. How clearly has this been accomplished!

V. After a limited time, during which they were given into his hand, judgment was to sit upon this dominion, to consume and to destroy, ver. 25, 26.

1. Let us attend to the description of the great destroyer of the little horn, ver. 9, 10, 11. I imagine that Jesus Christ is meant by the Ancient of Days: 1. Because Christ is the Judge, and is set forth as the destroyer of his enemies, and particularly of Anti-christ, Psal. ii. 12. & cx. 2 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xix. 2. From its similarity to the description of Christ, both in Rev. xix. and especially in Rev. i. 3. Because in the explanation of the vision, the Son of Man is said to be the figure of the saints of the Most High, ver. 22. 27. These reasons incline me to prefer that view. If any prefer the other view, *viz.* That the Son of Man is Jesus Christ, which receives considerable countenance from Matt. xxvi. 64. I have no objection: it interferes not in the least with any material view I entertain of the leading sentiments in this prophecy.

2. A judgment is described as sitting upon the little horn, to consume till the end, and to a certain effect to take away his dominion, ver. 25, 26. 9, 10, 11. This is also represented, 2 Thess. ii. 8. Consider the instruments of this,

1. The word of God, and its genuine light and influence upon the minds and consciences of men, 2 Thess. ii. 8. Rev. xiv. 6,—13. This passage in the Revelation, sets forth the promulgation of the ancient gospel, the kingdom of Jesus, and his supreme dominion, and

true worship and fear, in opposition to the kingdom, worship, and fear of Antichrist.

2. The kings of the earth withdrawing their support, favour, and protection, Rev. xvii. 16, 17. But this does not proceed from any favour to the cause of Christ, but from their own political interests; for, even at the last, John in vision saw the power of the fourth monarchy, under the ten kings, confederated with Antichrist, in opposition to the Judge of the world. Rev. xix. 19.; and so Daniel speaks here, v. 11.

3. The final judgment and destruction of Antichrist, is set forth, ver. 26. "The judgment shall sit to destroy," ver. 11. "I beheld," &c. 2 Thess. ii. "Whom the Lord shall destroy;" see Rev. xix. 19, 20.

VI. *Christ's kingdom, in its glorious state, shall succeed to this even on the earth, before the general judgment,* Dan. ii. 44. and ver. 22. 27. of this chapter, Rev. xx. 4, 5, 6.*

Having thus attempted a short illustration of the principal things contained in this chapter, let us now briefly suggest the suitable improvement of them.

1. This subject sets forth, in a very striking manner, the truth of the Holy Scriptures, and is sufficient of itself, if duly attended to, to demonstrate the truth of Christianity. Daniel wrote this prophecy during the existence of the Assyrian empire, and carries on, in his prophetic vision, a distinct series of important events,

* This is the reign of the saints, raised from the dead at the resurrection of the just. The glory and privileges of that kingdom are entirely spiritual.

till the second coming of Jesus Christ. He sees and describes, after the Babylonish, three successive monarchies; the division of the fourth empire into ten kingdoms; the rise, progress, empire, character, downfall, and ruin of another spiritual kingdom, reigning with and over them. What is called profane history, is really just an exposition of this prophecy. Every event in its order has been exactly accomplished hitherto; and thus we have the utmost security for the full accomplishment of what yet remains.

2. This chapter holds up a lamp to shew us the times wherein we live. The first Christians lived under the fourth monarchy, which might be therefore styled the last age. But we live in the last period of the last days; for we not only have seen the accomplishment of the ten kings reigned over by Antichrist, but we have seen the judgment sitting, to consume and take away his dominion; and the kings of the earth hating that power, making it desolate and naked. What then do we now expect, but the King of kings coming to judgment! and what effects should this produce?—It ought

To make us attentive to his words and will, Rev. xxii. 12. &c.; to make us look and long for his appearing, Rev. xxii. 20. and to draw off our hearts and affections from all things here below.

It ought to stimulate our earnest desires for the salvation and deliverance of sinners, Rev. xxii. 17.

The influence of this conviction should lead all the people of God to consider well what religious connexion they are joined to; to consider the call, Rev. xiv. 7. &c. xviii. 4. &c. and the declaration, ch. xxii. 18, 19.

Sinners ought to be powerfully influenced, in this accepted time, to come unto Christ.

ON THE BIRTH OF CHRIST.

LUKE ii. 1—21.

May 1791.

IN this passage, we see the fulfilment of the important prophecies concerning the birth and coming of the Messiah. This glorious event was most particularly foretold. It was set forth, that it should take place about the time that the sceptre departed from Judah, Gen. xlix. 10.; during the standing of the second temple, Haggai ii. 6. &c. Mal. iii. 1. Seventy weeks of years, or 490 years from the going forth of the commandment to restore and rebuild Jerusalem, Dan. ix. 24. He was to be descended from David—born of a virgin, Isa. vii. 14. in Bethlehem Ephratah, Micah v. 2. He was to be mean and lowly in his appearance, Isa. liii. 2.; and his coming in his ministry was to be preceded by a notable prophet preparing his way, Isa. xl. 3. &c. Mal. iii. 1. and iv. 5.

In the birth of Christ, we see the utmost meanness, every thing opposite to human pride and glory: his mother delivered in the stable of a common Inn, and himself laid in a manger. But what a strange conjunction with this, of the most resplendent glory and grandeur, unknown at the birth of the greatest earthly sovereign! Witness the glad acclamations of the heavenly hosts, and that occurrence related Matt. ii. the creation of a star, and the long journey of the Eastern Magi, or wise men, to welcome this King of the Jews.

Every circumstance here was characteristical of Christ,

and the nature of his kingdom. He all along sustained the appearance with which he set out ; yet he shone with spiritual glory, and, on some remarkable occasions, outwardly manifested it. The angels announced the glad-tidings of Messiah to mean and poor shepherds. Such, as to circumstances in general, were to be his subjects : yet not exclusively. Peasants and philosophers were equally to be interested in the gospel, and all the ends of the earth to see the salvation of God.

Consider the import of the glad tidings declared by the angels.

I. Who this child was ; just consult the Scriptures at this time fulfilled, Micah v. 2. Isa. vii. 14. Isa. ix. 6. Mal. iii. 1. Isa. xl. 3. 9. &c. I have quoted all these passages on account of the infinite importance of the subject, and because, in the present time, every attempt is made to set aside the distinction in the Deity, and the Godhead of Christ, by those terming themselves *Unitarians*, who would fain persuade the world, that they have made, by their enlightened minds, some new discovery, while they are only venting the grossest errors of an old Sabellian. The personal distinction in the Deity is important in itself ; important, because, without it, we lose the person of the Saviour ; for who is Christ ? Is he very God in human nature ? a *Divine Person* ? Then, is he not another than the Father who sent him, and must he not be distinguished from the Holy Spirit who anointed him ? If this is not the case, we lose the Son of God, and can only think of a human person, inhabited some way by the Deity. The first beginning of Unitarian sentiments, has always been an affected nicety about the use of the term *Person*, and an equally affected fear about introducing three Gods :

whereas, this is not the common and dangerous extreme, but the other, *viz.* Denying the revealed distinction, on which all the hope and salvation of the guilty depends. Jesus then is God, the Word in human nature. The Divine Person of the Word took a human body and soul, to be his own; so that it was not a human person, but the human nature of God the Word. Thus, all the words and works of Jesus are the words and works of a Divine Person; and thus God could die, purchase the church with his own blood, &c.—Consider,

II. His character, and the end for which he came: To be a Saviour. Thus also Simeon spake of him, ver. 30. and of his sufferings, ver. 34, 35. This the Old Testament Scriptures set forth, Dan. ix. 24. 26. Isa. liii. 4. &c. This work of peace and reconciliation is mentioned in the praises of the angels, ver. 14.

III. Here is set forth, the freedom of Divine grace, and the extent of Christ's salvation: this foretold, Isa. xl. 3. &c. Psal. cii. 16. &c. The glad tidings declared to all, and salvation proclaimed to the believer in Jesus.

IV. Attend to the view given of the Divine character. The glory of God is the display of his perfections; all his works of creation and providence illustrate them in part; nay, his terrible works of judgment manifest them; but his full glory could not be displayed but by a suitable and worthy image of the invisible God, in whom all the fulness of the Godhead might dwell, and through him shine forth. This was to be done in the work of the redemption of sinners, where all the perfections of God were to unite and blaze forth together in the highest possible glory; "Glory to God in the highest," &c. Sinners naturally afraid of God; but this manifestation of God is truly encouraging:

shows God reconciled, and reconciles the sinner to God, and makes him delight in the divine character. This was also set forth in the Old Testament, Isa. xlv. 21. &c. Jer. ix. 23, 24. Psal. lxxxix. & cii. This Paul speaks of, 2 Cor. iv. This is the song of Christians here, and it shall be their song to all eternity. It is now the study and the song of angels, who learn by the church, more than they ever knew of God before.

ON THE SUFFERINGS OF CHRIST.

LUKE xxiv. 26.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things?

THE sufferings of Christ, surely a most important subject; near the heart of every Christian; one great scope of the prophets; largely set forth by the evangelists; weekly represented in the Lord's supper, to impress the minds of his friends, and raise their affections.

1st, We shall consider, in some particulars, the sufferings of Christ.

2d, Set forth the great end and design of them.

3d, Show, in some things, what improvement we ought to make of this subject.

I. We are to consider the sufferings of Christ. For the sake of perspicuity, we shall think of them,

1. In the way of humiliation, reproach, and shame.
2. Cruel usage and pain of body.

3. Sufferings of soul from the immediate hand of God.

1. Humiliation, reproach, and shame. These foretold, Psal. lxxix. 7. 12. 19, 20. Think on his humiliation, as set forth, Philip. ii. 6. &c.; at his birth laid in a manger; educated in low life. Especially consider him after entering on his public ministry. By his friends counted mad; his pretensions vilified by his enemies; the wonderful works he performed attributed to an evil influence; and his character traduced and misrepresented: let us add, exposed to the attacks and temptations of the devil and his angels, even while they knew him to be that Peerless ONE, who led the hosts of heaven, while as yet they continued in their first estate. Think of him when apprehended. Betrayed by a disciple. How pathetically is the Messiah set forth as bewailing this! Psal. lv. 12. &c. xli. 9.; which last quoted in the New Testament; and, as he was betrayed by one disciple, forsaken by all. But especially consider him after he was in the hands of his enemies. See Matt. xxvi. 67, 68. & Mark xiv. 65. In the midst of this usage, and in his view, denied once and again, nay, three times with every aggravated circumstance denied, by the only one of the twelve who had courage to follow him. Before Pilate, his pretensions ridiculed; also by Herod, Luke xxiii. 11. This mockery, immediately before and after his condemnation, carried to the highest pitch, John xix. 2—6. Matt. xxvii. 27—32. He was numbered with transgressors, he was reckoned the worst; a robber and murderer was deemed more worthy to live. He suffered the ignominious death of the cross, appropriated to slaves and the worst of malefactors, and saw and heard the exultations of his enemies in the hour of his distress, Matt. xxvii. 38. &c.

2. Cruel usage, and pain of body. He was buffeted while before the council ; scourged by authority of the governor.—Then, this meek and peaceful ONE delivered into the hands of a licentious soldiery, who united the most barbarous cruelty to the most studied contempt ; the crown of thorns violently struck into his head ; so that, at last, he was unable to bear his cross.—He was crucified. Do we think of the pain of this death ? Naked ; his hands and feet pierced ; exposed to heat, and cold, and thirst, till the blood forsook the body !

3. sufferings of soul from the immediate hand of God. This mentioned, Isa. liii. 10, 11. View his soul-agony at Gethsemane, while as yet no human hand was upon him, Matt. xxvi. 36—46. Luke xxii. 43, 44. Yet, great as this was, it was nothing to his soul-agony on the cross, when he cried, “ My God ! ” &c. for that was the hour and the cup of sorrow he dreaded, and the foresight and foretaste of which filled him in the garden with such amazement and terror.

Reflect, then, O our souls ! on our Saviour, in that dread hour when he stood in the room of sinners : on the strange conjunction, in his case, of every circumstance of sorrow and wretchedness ; the lowest pitch of shame and ignominy ; the acutest feeling of pain and suffering ; earth and hell in league against him ! While his spirit, so far from sustaining his infirmity, was yet more deeply wounded by the sharp arrows of HIM, who is almighty to kill, and make alive ; and the deep agony of his soul, from the hiding of his Father’s countenance, wrung from his heart, amid the triumph of his foes, the mournful and pathetic exclamation, “ My God ! my God ! why hast thou forsaken me ? ”

II. Consider, shortly, the grand end and design of these sufferings.—And, that he thus suffered as an atoning sacrifice for the sins of his people, is abundantly evident,

1. From the express declaration of Scripture, Isa. liii. 4, 5, 6, 10. 1 Peter ii. 24, 25. Gal. iii. 13.

2. From the very face of the case. Christ himself was perfectly righteous and holy: why then his agony in the view of death, when his servants have smiled at all its horrors? his words on the cross explain it. And why was he forsaken? This can be only understood in the view of his making atonement.

III. Attempt, in a few particulars, to show the use and improvement we ought to make of this subject.

1. This is a confirmation of the truth of the doctrine taught by Christ; for, in these things, the Jews fulfilled the Scriptures in their hands, Luke xxiv. 25. &c.

2. It ought to convince all, of the certain destruction of impenitent unbelieving sinners, and that there is no other way of salvation but the cross of Christ. If the cup could not pass from the Son of God, how shall it pass from them? If the prayers of the Son of God himself were heard, only in delivering him from that death which he tasted, how vain must be all human penitence, prayers, tears, works, and endeavours? All, in short, must perish, but those interested in Him, who is “a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest.” See Luke xxiii. 31.

3. How secure are all who are interested in him! For them justice is satisfied, and joins with mercy in a plea in their favour. God spared not his own Son: with him he will give all things.

4. This awful transaction ought fully to convince us

of the infinite evil of sin ; how hateful it is to God, so that we may utterly detest and forsake it.

5. Ought not the most noble feelings of love and gratitude be raised to our dear Redeemer ? We may say with the church in Psal. xlv. 17. " I will make thy name to be remembered in all generations." And as at all times we should cultivate these feelings of attachment, so peculiarly in the Lord's supper. In this ordinance, he particularly points himself out as the object of grateful remembrance ; calls on us to show forth his death ; to eat and drink in remembrance of him. He promises his presence with us, while thus employed. Can any thing be more delightful, than fully to enter into the spirit of this ordinance, and with tender sorrow, and fervent love, to remember his love who died for us ? Surely our souls may well bless him from the house of the Lord.

6. Let us show our love, by regarding his authority, by loving his people, by confessing him with boldness, by suffering for him. *Amen.*

ON THE SABBATH.

HEBREWS iv. 9, 10.

There remaineth therefore a sabbatism to the people of God ; for he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.

1st, **P**ROVE the first day of the week to be a Christian Sabbath.

2d, Consider the way it was and ought to be kept.

3d, What is implied in Christians observing it.

4th, Some of the great ends of doing so.

I. Prove the first day of the week to be the Christian Sabbath.

1. From this context, ver. 1. &c.—Three rests spoken of; the rest from the works of creation, the rest in Canaan, and the heavenly rest. Two days mentioned, the seventh day, and another day. The seventh, the day of rest to the first two: it was continued as to the rest in Canaan, for the law of Moses had in it a representation of the law which Adam broke, while it also pointed to the promised seed as the great Fulfiller of the law, and also because the rest in Canaan was a figure of the rest by Christ; therefore, the same day was continued till the true rest came, ver. 8. “For if Jesus (or Joshua) had given them rest, then would he not afterwards have spoken of another day.” This day mentioned, ver. 7, 8. It must not be understood as an indefinite period of time, as may be admitted partly in ch. iii. but as a proper day, the same kind of day with the seventh day, from which it is distinguished.—This appears still more evident from the apostle’s conclusion, ver. 9. “There remaineth a sabbatism, or keeping of Sabbath:” *anapausis* is the word rendered rest in the other verses, but here *sabbatismos*: and the reasoning is clear and conclusive for keeping the first day of the week as the Sabbath of rest; for he adds, as the reason of it, “For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his.”

2. From the practice of the first Christians. We see its beginning, John xx. 19.; its continuance, ver. 26. If we understand Christ as ascending on that day, of which

afterwards, Luke xxiv. 50. is also in point; see likewise Acts ii. 1. The day of Pentecost that year fell on the first day of the week. On the 14th day of the first month, being Thursday, Christ did eat the passover; the next day, Friday the 15th, was the first day of unleavened bread, appointed an annual Sabbath and day of convocation; the day following was the 16th, the weekly Sabbath, and the day after the festival Sabbath: this was the day of the wave-offering, from which the reckoning of seven weeks began; so the day of Pentecost, the feast of the first fruits, the 50th day, must have fallen that year on the first day of the week. See Exodus, ch. xii. Leviticus, ch. xxiii. Consult also, as to Christians observing this day, Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.

3. Some other passages of Scripture also are in point, Matt. xxiv. 20. By this time the Jewish Christians were loosed from keeping the seventh-day Sabbath; this also shows how important the Christian Sabbath is.—Mark ii. 28. the Jews thought that Christ's works of mercy dishonoured the Sabbath; but he shows, that the Son of man would abrogate their Sabbath, and appoint another day in honour of his great work of mercy to mankind sinners.—Rev. i. 10. the Lord's day, a day sacred to the Lord; by this appellation distinguished even as the Lord's supper.

4. This day has been highly honoured by many signal occurrences.

This was the day that Christ made his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, see John xii. 1. & 12. &c. By the passover, the great feast-day meant, which was Friday; see ch. xiii. 1. Matt. xxvi. 4, 5. Now, from Saturday to Friday just six days, as mentioned, John xii. 1.; then was fulfilled Zech. ix. 9.; and this falling on

the first day of the week, appears not to have been accidental, but designed; for the words of the 118th Psalm applied. See Matt. xxi. 9.

This day he rose from the dead.

It is likely that this day he ascended: he ascended from the assembled brethren, Luke xxiv. Acts i. It is said, he was seen of them forty days. Now, six weeks are forty-two days: if then we deduct the two days of his resurrection and ascension, it makes forty full and free days. Here also Psal. cxviii. 22, 23. applies.

This day the Spirit came, Acts ii.; the glorious things of the kingdom of God were fulfilled; and the spirit of the feast of the first fruits celebrated.

Allow me to indulge the idea, that probably Christ will come again that day, see Acts i. 11.; while he comes with clouds, when he comes to bless his people, see Luke xxiv. 51.; and if he come on the first day of the week to his assembled disciples, we see a similarity to the way he went up to heaven, as set forth in this passage.

II. Consider the way the first day of the week was and ought to be kept.

1. It remains for the people of God; no Sabbath was at any time given to any other.—The day of rest was first given to Adam; and, though we read nothing of it, it is to be supposed that the posterity of Seth observed it. Then it was given to God's people Israel; and now the apostle says it remains for the true Israel, and indeed none else can observe it.

2. The whole day is to be observed; it is a day like the seventh; and indeed we see the disciples observing the whole day, by comparing Acts ii. 15. and xx. 7.

3. We are to keep it, by ceasing from our own works,

which may be lawfully done another day. Compare Exodus xx. 10, 11. with our text. We must not spiritualize this too much; in this sense, Christians always rest; but this day they are visibly to rest from their own works; see Isa. lviii. 13.; which is much in the spirit of New Testament times.—The temper of mind connected with thus resting from our own works, is surely spiritual and heavenly, being in the spirit, Col. iii. 1. &c. see Psal. cxviii. 24. &c.

4. We are peculiarly to observe it as a day of assembly with the people of God; Acts, ch. ii. and xx. we see almost the whole day employed in this way.

5. Thus assembled, we are to observe the ordinances Christ has appointed, Acts ii. 42. *The doctrine*, including reading of the Scriptures, 1 Tim. iv. 13.; preaching, Acts xx. 7.; exhortation of the brethren, Heb. x. 25.; *the fellowship*, or contribution, 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2.; *the Lord's supper*, Acts xx. 7. 1 Cor. xi. 20. &c. The *prayers*, which may include, the devotional exercises both of prayer and praise, also the love-feast was observed on the first day of the week, as we see from Acts xx. 11. See also Acts ii. 46. Jude, ver. 12.

III. What is implied in Christians observing this day.

1. Faith in Christ's resurrection.
2. Our whole hope and confidence being in the work which he finished, and from which he rested, and thus received the divine approbation, "It is very good."
3. Our having the hope of partaking in this rest.
4. Our love to Christ's name; the Lord's day sacred to his memory.
5. Being strangers and pilgrims on earth, evidenced

by our separating visibly from the world to serve and worship Christ.

6. Love to the saints for the truth's sake, with whom we assemble and worship.

7. Obedience to Christ as our King and Ruler.

8. Our waiting for him who will come suddenly.

IV. Some of the great ends of observing the Christian Sabbath.

1. It is intended to strengthen our faith, hope, and love; all the ordinances were well suited to this.

2. To deliver us from worldly-mindedness;—to keep up the remembrance that our rest is not here,—and break in upon all improper pursuits;—in these views set forth as a guard against apostasy, Heb. x. 23. &c.

3. It is intended for the comfort of disciples; the institutions of Christ most delightful, Matt. xxvi. 29. John xiv. 23. &c. Rev. iii. 20.; thus we are assured that we are his friends, and have a joyful prelude of bliss to come.

4. It leads to the cultivation of true brotherly love and union.

From this subject,

1. Let us examine if we have a proper meaning in observing the Sabbath, and rightly consider the things implied in it.

2. Let us highly honour and prize the Sabbath of rest, and the things on that day observed, see Psal. lxxxiv. Acts ii. 42. &c. Heb. x. 25.; and let us be anxious to enjoy in it comfort and refreshment, and to stir up our minds in attending to the ordinances, see Psal. cxviii. 22. &c.

3. We may clearly see that the Christian Sabbath

was never intended for a nation of this world, and cannot be observed by it, unless we could conceive a nation believing in Christ's resurrection, having hope founded on his works, hoping to enter into his rest, loving his name, appearing as strangers and pilgrims, loving the saints, obeying Christ, and waiting for his coming; which cannot be seen. All attempts of this kind have been, like other parts of established Christianity, but the form of godliness, without the power of it. And however strict a form professors of religion may have of keeping the Sabbath, it cannot be observed in the spirit of self-righteousness, covetousness, and worldly-mindedness, or in a lukewarm and indifferent state of mind to the brethren of Jesus Christ.

REVELATION i. 17, 18.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not: I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

THESE words may be literally rendered thus: "Fear not: I am the first and the last, and the living One: and I was dead, and behold I am alive unto ages of ages, Amen; and have the keys of the grave and of death."

John was in banishment at Patmos.—On the Lord's day, the Son of man appears to him in glorious majesty. Penetrated with fear, and struck to the ground before

him, the gracious Shepherd of Israel comforts and encourages his drooping spirits in the words read.

1st, We shall illustrate the words.

2d, Consider how they stand forth as an antidote against all discouraging fears.

I. Illustrate the words.

“I am the first and the last, and the living One.” These words set forth, in the most striking manner, the divine dignity of the Speaker. The context had declared the same: compare ver. 8. 11, 12. &c. The expression, “the first and the last,” only applicable to the Most High God; see Isa. xlv. 6. This language continued by the Speaker through that chapter and the next; and in ver. 21. &c. of chap. xlv. we find the Speaker the same as in Rev. i. for it is applied to Christ, Rom. xiv. 10, 11, 12. The term, “the living One,” sets forth the self-existence of Jesus Christ: thus also he is termed “the Prince of life,” and also thus described, John i. 4. Can any thing more clearly evince the supreme divinity of the Son of God?

“And I was dead;” he who was the first and the last, and the Son of man.

He took human nature, that he might suffer and die, John i. 14. Heb. ii. 14. &c.

The nature and cause of his death set forth in this chapter, ver. 5.; also in chap. v. ver. 9. Peter represents the meaning of his death, 1 Peter ii. 24. glancing at Isa. liii.; and Paul clearly shews the Hebrews, that Christ’s death was an atoning sacrifice for sin, chap. x. 5. &c. commenting on the 40th Psalm.

“And behold I am alive for evermore,” or, “unto ages of ages;” thus termed, ver. 5. “the First-begotten of the dead,” &c.

His resurrection specially proves the value of his sacrifice. "He was brought from the dead through the blood of the everlasting covenant," Heb. xiii. 20. The vision on the holy mount, and the voice from heaven, had a peculiar reference to his resurrection, Matt. xvii. 9. ; and Paul particularly proves from this the perfection of his sacrifice, Heb. x. 10. &c. His resurrection also demonstrates the reality of eternal life. The gospel, or good news of this, brings life and immortality to light. Thus Paul reasons, in 1 Cor. xv. ver. 20. &c. Thus Peter glories, 1 epist. chap. i. ver. 3, 4.

"And have the keys of (hell, or) the grave, and of death." As the first-begotten from the dead, all power and dominion belong to him, ver. 5. See also Col. i. 15. &c. Compare the expression with Rev. iii. 14. Consult Psal. ii. 7. &c. Heb. i. ver. 4. &c.

In this excellent dignity he appears in this vision to John, fulfilling the prophecy of Zechariah, "He shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne ; and he shall be a priest upon his throne."—When he is said to have the keys, &c. it denotes his supreme power and dominion in and over the unseen state, as mentioned also Philip. ii. 10, 11.—Because he has the keys of death, he can open the gates of paradise to the souls of his sheep, with whom he is present in the valley and shadow of death ; and having the keys of the grave and of death, he will open their graves at the last, and raise them from death and the grave ; fulfilling his ancient words, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave : I will redeem them from death. O death ! I will be thy plagues : O grave ! I will be thy destruction : repentance shall be hid from mine eyes."

II. Let us shortly consider how these words stand forth as an antidote against all discouraging fears.

Man is naturally a timid fearful creature ; in so far as alive to his real situation, his conscience is oppressed with guilt ; and, fond of a miserable life, he shudders at the view of an hereafter, which he only knows enough of to dread and consider with horror.

The faith of the testimony of Jesus alone can dispel this gloom ; can enable a man with confidence to reflect that he is a sinner, and with joyful hope that he is a mortal.

The most just cause of disquiet in the human breast, is the conviction of sin, and the dread of its punishment : it is this that makes death appear as the king of terrors to the awakened soul ; it is the entrance upon misery : it is the forerunner of judgment. But O how glorious and divinely excellent are the words of Jesus, in this point of view !

They set forth a finished atonement for sin.

A most prevalent and valuable one indeed, made by the First and the Last.

An accepted atonement, for the peace is made ; and the God of peace has shown this, by raising the Sufferer from the dead.

Here is an end to all the perplexing questions that haunt the mind and conscience of an awakened sinner, forcibly expressed, Micah vi. 6, 7. The work is done, God is pleased ; hear, and your soul shall live.

Are we, brethren, ready to recoil at the thought of a world of spirits, or to dread to lay us down in death ? Then think on the words of the Son of man, " I have the keys of the grave and of death." He who died, has all power in the unseen state. The great Shepherd receives the souls of his dying saints to himself ; and at the last day, with his almighty word, shall call them

from the grave, and trample on the power of the last enemy.

Lastly, Are we ready to be discouraged by tribulation in the kingdom of Jesus Christ, and apt to faint and be weary at unfavourable or perplexing appearances? Let us think of Him who walks in the midst of his churches, and holds the stars in his right hand; let us meditate on his love, his wisdom, his power, and his faithfulness, and not be cast down. He sits upon the throne of David, and his name is the Mighty God, the Counsellor, and the Prince of peace. Upon that throne, of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end; and with zeal he will order and establish his kingdom, with judgment and with justice for ever. *Amen.**

* See this subject more fully illustrated afterwards.

THE
D U T Y
OF
SUBJECTION TO CIVIL RULERS.*

ROMANS xiii. 1.

Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers ; for there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God.

July 31. 1791.

- 1st, **W**HO are the powers, and what said of them.
2d, What is implied in being subject to them.

I. Who are the higher powers, &c.

Not the noble, powerful, or rich, who are not invested with legal authority : Christians ought to behave courteously to such, as they are to honour all men ; but no peculiar respect, or subjection, is founded on these advantages of birth and situation.

Neither does the apostle mean spiritual or religious powers ; surely not the idolatrous establishments then

* This and the two following Discourses were originally included with the preceding Notes, under the title of ' Notes of nine Discourses,' &c. Mr Inglis afterwards enlarged them, and published them separately.

existing ; they were not ordained of God, but founded by Satan in opposition to him ; see 1 Cor. x. 20, 21. As little can we include in this command, subjection to the establishment of corrupted Christianity that was to succeed ; see 2 Thess. ii. 3. &c. Rev. xiv. 9, 10. This power, even in its first beginning, was hostile to civil rulers, 2 Peter ii. 10. Jude, ver. 8. ; but this was carried afterwards to the highest pitch, Rev. xvii. 13, 18. So far then is subjection to antichrist, or the profession of corrupted Christianity from being implied in this command, that it is rather quite inconsistent with it ; the history of Europe, for some hundred years, will evince this.

The higher powers, then, are the civil ruling magistrates of the nations of this world ; see Titus iii. 1. “ Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates.” It is all one what the form of this government is ;—a republic, where the supreme magistrates are chosen by the people,—an aristocracy, where the power is in the hands of the nobility,—or a kingdom, under either absolute or limited monarchy. The word of God says nothing about the form of government for nations, but calls on Christians every where to subjection. Again, it is the same thing, as to this submission, whether this power has been acquired justly, or without right, nay, whether it is exercised with equity and humanity, or with tyranny and rigour : the combination of these two form the strongest objection, but they are exactly here in point. This epistle was written to the Romans, in the reign of Nero ; the empire was a usurpation of the ancient and boasted liberty of the Roman people, and a usurpation but of a recent date ; and Nero exercised the sovereignty with the utmost cruelty : he polluted it with lust, and degra-

aled it by constant exhibitions of folly and madness.— Finally, Christians are called to subjection to magistrates, whether supreme or subordinate, 1 Peter ii. 13, 14.

These powers are appointed by God for wise purposes, ver. 3, 4.: “For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: for he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doth evil.” Indeed, the worst government is better than none; even that of Nero, upon the whole, answered the ends intended. Did not Paul benefit by it? Was not he protected from the violence of mobs? Did he not, by appeal, preserve himself from the Jews, and succeed in that appeal, for some time, with Nero himself?

II. What is implied in being subject to the powers?

1. Respect both in our thoughts and words to magistrates, supreme and subordinate, ver. 7.: “Render, therefore, to all their dues: fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour;” see also Eccles. x. 20. 1 Peter ii. 17. 2 Peter ii. 9. &c. No doubt, Christians will inwardly respect the deserving; they cannot approve of what is bad; but still they are called to respect even bad men in their official capacity of rulers. 1 Peter ii. 18. &c. is in point here.

2. Our wishing them all good and prosperity here, and hereafter, 1 Tim. ii. 1. &c. “I exhort therefore, that first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men; for kings, and

for all that are in authority: for this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth."

3. Obedience to every lawful command, ver. 5. "Wherefore ye must need be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake." See Titus iii. 1. 1 Peter ii. 13, 14.

4. Contribution for their support with cheerfulness, ver. 6, 7. "For, for this cause, pay you tribute also; for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing. Render, therefore, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom." Consult likewise Luke xx. 25. Christians are not to join in the murmurs about taxes, nor to think they have a right to know precisely how they are applied. The subjects of every government are bound to pay for their protection and support, and place some covetous murmurers against taxes, in a situation without a restraining government, and you would see how gladly they would contribute ten times the amount of taxes, in order to procure safety and protection. There is then both folly and ingratitude in the outcry about taxes.

5. This subjection is inconsistent with resistance, ver. 2. "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God; and they that resist, shall receive to themselves damnation," which must be opposed either to open rebellion, secret traitorous conspiracies, or all associations for the purpose of change and revolution. These last are incompatible with what is here called to. The reigning powers cannot consider this as peaceable subjection; and if they should punish it, it could not be called suffering for well doing. See the great end of Christians in their prayers respecting magistracy, 1 Tim.

ii. 2. "That we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty." Can a professor of religion, joining clubs established to promote revolution, with sincerity adopt this language? The disciples of Christ are men of another world, strangers and pilgrims on earth, counting eternal life, "the one thing needful;" pressing "towards the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus," Philip. iii. 14. This is too important an occupation, to give place to the disputes about the best way of ruling nations. The New Testament gives no form of civil government, but respects Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world; and all that Christians can require of any rulers, is to be permitted to "lead a quiet and peaceable life." Whatever government gives this, gives all they can lawfully wish; and if it is refused, they must either suffer, or retire: they dare not resist, or combine to force the exercise even of toleration. Christians are not at liberty to murmur even against the worst government, though they may lawfully partake in the joy, upon a better being established. For instance, in the case of Nero, they were not warranted to murmur against him, far less to conspire against his crown and life; but when he was removed, and some time after, Vespasian and Titus enjoyed the throne, they would surely rejoice in the change. The apostles and first Christians suffered more from the license of popular commotion, than the directed stroke of arbitrary power; and were often protected by the empire: and afterwards, when things in this respect were changed, ecclesiastical history gives a beautiful account of the unresisting patience of the Christian martyrs, when so numerous, that they might have been formidable to the empire.

We may now briefly examine the excuses, generally alleged by different kinds of men, for want of subjection, and for aiming at revolution ; and as we speak not to politicians, but simple Christians, we shall judge of them from the word of God.

1. ‘ The powers are not Christian, or, if professing Christianity, not doing it after a pure form, or promoting true religion.’ What kind of magistrates does the apostle here call Christians to be subject to? Were they not heathen idolaters ?

2. ‘ They are persecutors of Christians.’ What were Nero and others ?

3. ‘ They are arbitrary and unjust.’ The same answer sufficient.

4. ‘ The supreme magistrate is not the lawful power, but a usurper.’ We know what use was made of this, by a party after the Revolution, when the distinction was adopted between king *de facto*, and king *de jure*, or king in fact, and king by right ; and a false view given of the divine right of kings. The king *de facto*, who supports us, is the king *de jure* ; and he is appointed by God, and his minister ; in which sense divine right may be allowed. But as to this objection also, the case of Nero affords a full answer.

5. ‘ The only aim is restoration of constitutional principles.’ But this might have justified conspiracies against the Roman emperor, who had invaded the privileges of the senate, and the liberty of the Roman people. And if a total subversion will not vindicate this, will alleged partial encroachments on the part of the crown justify it? Let the men of the world engage in what they may call constitutional methods of redressing supposed grievances ; none, at setting out, can see the end of things of this kind : it is enough for Christians if they can

quietly worship God, and work with their own hands; and they are taught love and obedience to that government which enables them to do so.—Thus all these specious pleas which men have urged, are quite opposite to the word of God, and would infallibly lead Christians away from just views of Christ's religion and kingdom; from counting one thing needful; from suffering, and bearing the cross after Christ; and from being preserved from suffering as evil doers.

The situation of things at present, led me to consider this subject. I am sure, as a human creature, I rejoice at the fall of arbitrary power in France; and, as a Christian, in the ruin of antichrist, and the establishment of toleration; but it does not follow, that we must approve of all that has happened, or that we should not lament the reign and license of popular commotion, which has too much succeeded. But be this as it will, I am sure that Christians in France could have had no active hand in the Revolution, consistently with the principles of the Christian religion; and I think it highly proper, at a time when licentious ideas of liberty are become so fashionable, and have by many been incorporated into a religious system, that our sentiments should be strictly founded on the word of God. I would not prophesy evil; but the heads of many, even in this country, are full of reform: the infection may spread farther, and religious people, and especially Dissenters, are supposed readily to join in the idea. I would therefore exhort you to have your minds made up, that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.

Brethren, there is one obvious improvement. If Christians are to respect, wish well to, obey, and support the worst rulers, and not to stir against them; what is our duty in this country? We have long been esteemed a

We may now briefly examine the excuses, generally alleged by different kinds of men, for want of subjection, and for aiming at revolution ; and as we speak not to politicians, but simple Christians, we shall judge of them from the word of God.

1. ‘ The powers are not Christian, or, if professing Christianity, not doing it after a pure form, or promoting true religion.’ What kind of magistrates does the apostle here call Christians to be subject to ? Were they not heathen idolaters ?

2. ‘ They are persecutors of Christians.’ What were Nero and others ?

3. ‘ They are arbitrary and unjust.’ The same answer sufficient.

4. ‘ The supreme magistrate is not the lawful power, but a usurper.’ We know what use was made of this, by a party after the Revolution, when the distinction was adopted between king *de facto*, and king *de jure*, or king in fact, and king by right ; and a false view given of the divine right of kings. The king *de facto*, who supports us, is the king *de jure* ; and he is appointed by God, and his minister ; in which sense divine right may be allowed. But as to this objection also, the case of Nero affords a full answer.

5. ‘ The only aim is restoration of constitutional principles.’ But this might have justified conspiracies against the Roman emperor, who had invaded the privileges of the senate, and the liberty of the Roman people. And if a total subversion will not vindicate this, will alleged partial encroachments on the part of the crown justify it ? Let the men of the world engage in what they may call constitutional methods of redressing supposed grievances ; none, at setting out, can see the end of things of this kind : it is enough for Christians if they can

quietly worship God, and work with their own hands ; and they are taught love and obedience to that government which enables them to do so.—Thus all these specious pleas which men have urged, are quite opposite to the word of God, and would infallibly lead Christians away from just views of Christ's religion and kingdom ; from counting one thing needful ; from suffering, and bearing the cross after Christ ; and from being preserved from suffering as evil doers.

The situation of things at present, led me to consider this subject. I am sure, as a human creature, I rejoice at the fall of arbitrary power in France ; and, as a Christian, in the ruin of antichrist, and the establishment of toleration ; but it does not follow, that we must approve of all that has happened, or that we should not lament the reign and license of popular commotion, which has too much succeeded. But be this as it will, I am sure that Christians in France could have had no active hand in the Revolution, consistently with the principles of the Christian religion ; and I think it highly proper, at a time when licentious ideas of liberty are become so fashionable, and have by many been incorporated into a religious system, that our sentiments should be strictly founded on the word of God. I would not prophesy evil ; but the heads of many, even in this country, are full of reform : the infection may spread farther, and religious people, and especially Dissenters, are supposed readily to join in the idea. I would therefore exhort you to have your minds made up, that we may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour.

Brethren, there is one obvious improvement. If Christians are to respect, wish well to, obey, and support the worst rulers, and not to stir against them ; what is our duty in this country ? We have long been esteemed a

free and happy nation: after all that has happened, we are so still, compared with any people on the face of the earth. In our country is the reign of the laws, equally in opposition to arbitrary power, and to popular license and frenzy: we have perhaps as great a degree of civil liberty as is good for us; we enjoy full religious freedom; and we are governed by a prince whom, without a shock to our feelings, we can respect and esteem; who, by the constitution, can do no harm, and who is not disposed to do it. Surely then it is our duty and privilege to pray for the continuance of such a government, the life and happiness of such a prince; to contribute with cheerfulness to their support; and to attend to the admonition of the wise man, "My son, fear thou the Lord and the king; and meddle not with them that are given to change."

Let us also show proper respect and subjection to all inferior rulers and magistrates. In this country, they are all subject to the law; they have it not in their power to commit much injustice; but they are surely not the less entitled to our reverence and obedience.

THE
CONVERSION

OF

THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.*

Acts viii. 26—40.

THE history of the Acts of the Apostles is highly important, and is a most valuable part of divine revelation. In this book is brought before our eyes the interesting scene that succeeded Christ's resurrection and ascension.

* To a separate edition of this discourse, published in 1796, the following Advertisement was prefixed:—‘ The Author of the following Discourse, who, although a teacher of Christianity, is no clergyman, will very frankly give the reason for its publication in its present form. There is at present a considerable stir amongst religious people: many are making haste to leave the national church, and some large dissenting bodies, from a conviction of their being repugnant to the New Testament in their constitution and order. They are however at the same time in danger of establishing separate parties, without considering, with sufficient care, the ground on which they proceed, and the great evil which the increase of sects may occasion to the profession of Christianity; and they seem to be in danger of entirely overlooking the very first ordinance in the kingdom of Jesus Christ. The Author of this little tract, who

We behold the preaching of the glad news of salvation, and the glorious effects which they produced in the hearts and conduct of all who gave them credit ; and we see the nature, laws, and ordinances of the kingdom of Christ fully ascertained, in the approved example of the apostles and first Christians.

It appears from this chapter, that Philip, who was an evangelist, had been obliged, along with the other teachers, to leave Jérusalem on account of the persecution that arose about Stephen. In consequence of this, he went up and down preaching the word of God. The former part of this chapter gives an account of his doing so at Samaria ; and the last part of it sets forth his preaching to an eunuch from Ethiopia, by the express appointment of God, and the effects which this discourse produced ; to which subject we shall now shortly call your attention.

The person to whom Philip preached, was a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem to worship. From this description of him, and from his reading the prophet Isaiah, it appears he was a Jewish proselyte ; but although a worshipper of the God of Israel, he seems, like his brethren the Jews, to have been totally ignorant of the meaning of the law and the prophets ; for when reading the most clear and affecting description of the Messiah's death and sufferings, he asks, *Of whom*

‘ heartily bids such persons God speed, so far as they follow the
‘ word of God, has been led to publish it at present, chiefly on
‘ account of their situation ; and he has studied simplicity and
‘ brevity, that it may be procured at little expence, soon read,
‘ and easily understood.’

speaketh the prophet this, of himself, or of some other man?

Let us consider what Philip preached to him. The eunuch was reading that part of Isaiah, which now forms chap. liii. the most memorable prophecy of Christ in the whole Old Testament. Philip could desire no better text for his discourse, and therefore he began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. Let us attend to some of the most important things, which we are sure Philip must have preached upon this occasion.

1. He preached that Jesus was the true Messiah, the Son of God. So we see the eunuch, when he confesses his faith, declares, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And indeed there was a very clear description of the divine dignity of the Messiah, very near the place where the eunuch read, and from which Philip preached; for it is written in Isa. liv. 5. and the words relate to the Messiah, "Thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel: the God of the whole earth shall he be called."

2. Philip preached Christ as the Saviour of sinners. It is said, that the place of the Scripture which the eunuch read was this, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter, and like a lamb dumb before his shearers, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation, his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." And, that Philip, from the same Scripture, "preached unto him Jesus," which implies, that he declared unto him the guilty and lost situation of mankind, and that Jesus, the true Messiah, came into the world to save sinners; that he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised

for our iniquities, and thus bore the chastisement of our peace, or the punishment of our sins, upon his own body on the tree.

3. There can be no doubt, that Philip would also declare his resurrection and exaltation. These are plainly set forth in the passage of Scripture the eunuch read, Isa. liii. 10, 11, 12.; and we see, in all the discourses of the apostles and first ministers of the word, that they proclaimed Christ's resurrection and exaltation, which formed indeed the decisive proof of his being the Son of God and the Saviour of the world.

4. The apostles and evangelists always declared to those who heard them, that sinners obtain an interest in Christ's salvation by giving credit to the joyful sound of the gospel. Peter says to the Gentiles at Cesarea, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth on him shall receive the remission of sins," Acts x. 43. And Paul, preaching at Antioch, declares, "Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by him, all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses," Acts xiii. 38, 39. The passage which the eunuch read, set forth the salvation of men by faith in these words: "By his knowledge (*i. e.* by the knowlege of him) shall my righteous servant justify many;" and that Philip had inculcated the necessity of faith, is evident, from his saying, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest be baptized."

The mind of the eunuch was deeply impressed with the important news which he heard: he believed the glad tidings of salvation. And let us now observe the

immediate effects which his faith produced, and consider in order what followed his reception of the truth.

1. It is said, ver. 36. "As they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? and Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

This demand upon the part of the eunuch demonstrates, that Philip had inculcated the necessity of every believer in Christ being baptized. Indeed, we see that the first preachers of the word always did so. Peter, in addressing the Jews at Jerusalem, says, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." And in his first sermon to the Gentiles, when the Holy Spirit fell upon his hearers, he says, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized?" The instructions of Jesus Christ to those that preach the gospel, expressly require all who would faithfully execute them, to state the necessity of believers being baptized; for Christ says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature: he that believeth, and is baptized, shall be saved," Mark xvi. 15, 16. And, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," Matt. xxviii. 19. These instructions are clear and express; but if there were any doubt or ground of hesitation, this book of the Acts must remove every difficulty; for here we have an inspired account of what the apostles actually did in executing the commission which they received from their Lord; and we are sure they obtained mercy to be faithful. Let any person therefore consult this book, and say whether the recorded instances of

baptism do not clearly show, that all the persons baptized by the apostles professed with the mouth to believe in Jesus Christ. When Peter preached at Jerusalem, it is said, "They that gladly received his word were baptized," Acts ii. 41. At Samaria, "when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women," Acts viii. 12. When Peter commanded the Gentiles at Cesarea to be baptized, he gives as the reason for it, "Because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost; for they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God," Acts x. 45, 46. It is affirmed as to Lydia and her household, whom the apostle Paul baptized—of her, that the Lord opened her heart to attend to the things that were spoken—and of them, that they were brethren capable of receiving comfort from the word of God, Acts xvi. 14, 15. 40. The jailor at Philippi "rejoiced, believing in God, with all his house," Acts xvi. 34. And we have an account of the persons baptized at Corinth, in the following terms: "Many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized," Acts xviii. 8.

These are all the cases of baptism recorded in the Acts, except the one we are now considering, and that of Paul himself; and surely no person, lending a candid ear to the word of God, will take upon him to say, that there is the smallest shadow of a warrant for the baptism of infants, or of any but those who profess the faith of Christ. Indeed, in one of the instances mentioned, the sacred historian, by the mode of expression he has adopted, excludes the possibility of the supposition. It is said, that at Samaria, "when they believed Philip, preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized,

both men and women." Had children been baptized at Samaria, is it possible to conceive, that all mention of them would have been carefully avoided? Can we believe, that the sacred word of God will have a tendency to mislead us? Who is there that attentively considers the proceedings of Philip at Samaria, that will lay his hand to his heart, and avow his firm belief, that Philip baptized a great many persons at Samaria, who were neither men nor women, and were incapable of believing the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ? yet, strange as the idea is, this must have been the case, if there is any warrant for the practice of infant baptism*.

2. We have an account of the eunuch's baptism, in these words: "And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more." We have the scene here presented before our eyes, and can have no reasonable doubt about what baptism is. Suppose a person who had never before

* It may be necessary here, in order to avoid being misunderstood, to declare, that I firmly believe in the eternal salvation of little infants, though not baptized. I believe them to be just as incapable of baptism as of the Lord's supper, but surely equally capable, as persons grown up, to receive the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ; and the Saviour himself expressly affirms, *of such is the kingdom of God*. The baptism of infants first arose, from men departing from the grace of God, and conceiving that ordinance to be necessary to salvation, and also from mistaken views of Christ's kingdom, holding it to be of this world, like the Jewish theocracy; and supposing that in *Christian nations* baptism succeeded the rite of circumcision.

heard of Christian baptism, let me ask, what conception he would have of it upon reading this passage? Would he suppose, that baptism was sprinkling a little water upon the face? Most assuredly not. He would believe, in consequence of what the inspired writer has told, that it was necessary, in order to the administration of this ordinance, to have a considerable quantity of water, and for both the baptizer and the person baptized to go into the water, and consequently that baptism was administered by immersion. Indeed, upon any other supposition, how can we imagine, that, anxious as the eunuch was about obtaining this ordinance, he never thought it practicable *till they came unto a certain water*? Surely there can be no doubt, that the eunuch and his retinue, in travelling through a sandy desert, where water could rarely be met with, must have had much more of that element along with them, than was necessary for going about that ordinance, in the way it is commonly done. This view of the case is confirmed by the places which the first baptizers chose. John Baptist baptized in the river of Jordan; and it is also said that he baptized in Enon, near to Salem, *because there was much water there*, John iii. 23. It is farther illustrated by the Holy Scriptures signifying, that in baptism there is a figure of a burial and resurrection, Rom. vi. 3, 4. Col. ii. 12, 13. And it is completely ascertained by the meaning of the original word, (βαπτίζω), which every person who has the least knowledge of the Greek language perfectly well knows can only be properly translated by the adoption of the English words, *to dip, immerse, or plunge*. It is well known, that this has been admitted by all the most eminent writers on infant baptism; and if our Lord, when he says *baptizing* them, uses a word which every body knew signified *to dip*, I

would be glad to know by what authority it is, that sprinkling, or pouring, has been substituted in its place. Perhaps we may find this in Dan. vii. 25. *He shall think to change times and laws ;* or in 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4. *He opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped, so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.*

3. It is said of the eunuch, that "he went on his way rejoicing." While he saw himself to be a poor miserable sinner ready to perish, he believed that Christ, the Son of the living God, had come into the world to seek and to save that which was lost ; that he had made a complete atonement for the guilty, in which God was well pleased ; and that eternal salvation was proclaimed to the believer in Jesus. These glad tidings filled him with joy and hope, and his faith and hope were confirmed and strengthened in the ordinance of baptism, which, to a believer, is connected with "the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ," 1 Pet. iii. 21.

I would only further mention, that, in the case of this convert, we see the genuine influence of the gospel, in bringing down the pride of the human heart, and leading those that believe the truth, to run all risks for its sake. This eunuch was a very great man. He is said to have been an eunuch of great authority in the idolatrous court of the queen of Ethiopia, and to have been so high in the confidence of his mistress, as to have had the charge of all her treasures. We may be sure, that on this occasion, Philip, like Christ and all his apostles, would fairly set before him the persecutions and afflictions which accompany the pure profession of the faith of Christ, and on which account he himself was then in exile. The eunuch, however, having counted the cost,

preferred eternal life to all that this world could bestow ; for the gospel's sake, he was prepared to meet with its highest opposition. And thus he followed the noble example which Paul so earnestly recommends to the Hebrews, ch. xi. 24. &c. “ By faith, Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter ; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season : esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt ; for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king ; for he endured as seeing him who is invisible.”

Call to the People of God,

TO COME OUT OF

B A B Y L O N :

BEING THE SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON PREACHED IN THE
BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE IN EDINBURGH,
ON AUGUST 30. 1789.*

REVELATION xviii. 4.

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

WHEN, at the first, the apostles preached the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they gathered together the believers of their tes-

* The following Advertisement was prefixed to this Discourse when first published :—‘ The motive which led the Author to preach the following sermon, was regard to the Lord’s people, yet groaning under antichristian captivity ; the evils of which he knew by experience. The same motive now leads him to circulate it wider by publication. It will be thought, that, in some places, his language is strong ; but, to be understood, and

timony, in churches, for the service and ordinances of Christ, and the works of brotherly love, as 1 Thess. i. 9, 10.; in which there was a remarkable fulfilment of the ancient prophecies, as Psal. cx.

It was not long before it was an established tradition in the churches, that antichrist should come; and to attention to this, they were particularly directed, by signs among themselves, intimating his approach; see 1 John ii. 18. 2 Thess. ii. 5. &c.

Some of the remarkable features of the antichristian power were, as we shall afterwards show, corruption of doctrine,—impurity of communion,—and, with a high hand, even in Christ's name, setting aside his own laws, and establishing inventions of their own.

In these respects, antichrist began to work early in the apostolic age, and more vigorously, after the death of the apostles of Christ; and a great deal of what is said in the epistles upon that subject, particularly in the epistles to Timothy, will apply, in the first place, to what then took place, and was to increase and turn worse, about the last times of the destruction of Jerusalem, a period described by Christ as perilous, in Matt. xxiv.

The power of antichrist, as already described, in-

‘ attended to, it is necessary to be plain, and evidently in ear-
 ‘ nest. He supposes the man would hardly be believed, who,
 ‘ with a smile and a bow, softly informed his neighbour, that the
 ‘ next step he made, would sink him in an unfathomable pit.
 ‘ The Author also well knows, that his style is not more severe
 ‘ than the language of that sacred book, which represents the sins
 ‘ and doom of Babylon; and he beseeches all professing Christ-
 ‘ ians to attend, without prejudice, to a subject which is to them
 ‘ of the last importance.

‘ *Edinburgh, Nov. 1. 1791.*’

creased gradually : it obtained much strength when the form of the Christian religion was thrown over the Roman empire, and was revealed in its greatest height, when the bishop of Rome succeeded the western emperor, in keeping united in a visible spiritual head, the broken parts of that empire, 2 Thess. ii. 7, 8.

But it was foretold, that that antichristian power should be brought low, 2 Thess. ii. 8. and the means are pointed out, "The spirit of his mouth."—This consumption of the man of sin was foretold in the prophecies of the Old Testament, Daniel vii. 25. viii. 14. xii. 11.

This destruction of antichrist comes by the preaching of the plain gospel of the kingdom of heaven ; by the restoring the ancient union of the people of God ; and by attending to Christ, as the King of Zion, and obeying his laws. But it may be also observed, that this false church is weakened, by the kings of the earth withdrawing their allegiance ; by the nations of the world resuming the rights and freedom of men ; and even by infidelity taking place of blind superstition.

These last thirty years have been a period truly interesting and remarkable : the events in Christ's kingdom, and in the world, have harmonized, in pointing out the weakening of the antichristian power, and in making all things ready for Christ's second coming. The pure preaching of the faith ; the ancient separation of the disciples ; the hearing Jesus Christ, and him only, as the Lord of our consciences ; are the grand evidences, wherever they appear, of the fulfilment of the Scriptures, as to the end of the time of universal captivity.—And when we view the bishop of Rome, as the visible head of the antichristian kingdom, can we think of the many things that have fallen out, and are now occur-

ring, without pronouncing him in a deep consumption? and by him, the head, we must judge of the state of the whole body.

The present revolution in France, is remarkable in this point of view : the blow is aimed with effect at ecclesiastical, as well as civil tyranny ; and however little regard there may be in this to Christ's religion, yet it will be the gainer in the end ; and this indeed, at the present period, we have reason to conclude, that among all commotions among nations, and strifes for power, the issue in every nation will be unfavourable to the pretensions of the Pope, and to clergymen of every denomination.

It is a melancholy truth, that the people of God are in Babylon, they are there in captivity : the Lord always condemned this connexion ; but now more than ever, when the light shines around them, and the call is loudly gone forth, " Come out of her, my people."

I. Let us consider some of the remarkable features of the antichristian power, or Babylon *. One preliminary remark it is proper to attend to, that it is essential to spiritual Babylon to have a profession of subjection to Christ.—In Rev. xvii. 1, 2. she is described " as the great whore, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication ;" which has a reference to her pretensions to be the spouse of Christ. In 2 Thessalonians ii. 4. " the man of sin is said to sit in the temple of God ;" and Paul describes the last days in this

* This power is termed Babylon, because eminently typified by the ancient Babylon, in idolatry, pride, pollutions, persecution of God's people, and in being the fountain-head of iniquity, corrupting the nations ; see Isa. xlvii. Jer. l. & li.

way, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," 2 Tim. iii. 5.

The *first* remarkable feature of Babylon to which I would call your attention, is corruption of doctrine. Paul writing to Timothy on this subject, speaks in this way: "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy," 1 Tim. iv. 1, 2.—Writing to the Thessalonians about the man of sin, he says, "And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming; even him whose coming is after the working of Satan, with all power, and signs, and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth that they might be saved; and for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie, that they all might be damned, who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness," 2 Thess. ii. 8—13.

Another clear testimony of this, we have in the second epistle of Peter, ch. ii. ver. 1. &c. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction; and many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of."

This passage is worthy of our particular attention, as it stands in connexion with ch. i. ver. 16. &c.; for it not only establishes the general view of antichrist

corrupting the Christian doctrine, but plainly points out how, and in what respects, this was to be done.

The great leaders of the antichristian apostasy, were to be professed Christian teachers: "There shall be false teachers among you." They were to introduce their heresies *privily*, that is, under the specious semblance of truth, and I apprehend, principally, by a private and unauthorised explication of the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which is guarded against in the context, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation; for the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost," 2 Pet. i. 20, 21.

Their heresies were to be levelled chiefly against the glorious transaction on the holy mount, recorded Matt. xvii. 1. &c. and which Peter in this context refers to, ch. i. 16. &c. "For we have not followed cunningly devised fables, when we made known unto you the power and coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; but were eyewitnesses of his majesty; for he received from God the Father honour and glory, when there came such a voice to him from the excellent glory, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; and this voice which came from heaven we heard, when we were with him on the holy mount." He adds, ver. 19. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy;" or rather, according to the literal version of the words, "We have more firm the prophetic word;" or we have the prophetic word confirmed, *i. e.* by the transactions on the holy mount, in which it was fulfilled; for the "testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy."

On the holy mount, Jesus was manifested to be the

Christ the Son of God ; by the glory with which he was invested ; by the appearance of Moses and Elias, bearing witness to him ; by the shining cloud, the symbol of the divine presence, surrounding him ; and, above all, by the voice from heaven, " This is my beloved Son."

Then also did Jehovah declare his good pleasure in the sacrifice he was to offer for the sins of men ; his decease was the subject of conversation, Luke ix. 31. ; and this the testimony, " in whom I am well pleased," respected.

On the holy mount, Christ appeared as that mighty King foretold by the prophets : he shone in spiritual and heavenly glory, the Great Prophet and the Lawgiver of Israel, and in them the dead and living appeared subject to the Son of Man ; while in the Father's call, " Hear ye him," he was set forth, as the Great Ruler and Lawgiver in his kingdom, Matt. xvii. 5.

Against these important truths, the antichristian heresies were to be directed : they were to respect Christ's person as Emmanuel ; the sufficiency of his sacrifice to save sinners ; and his supreme lordship and dominion, in a kingdom not of this world.

A *second* remarkable feature of antichrist, is impurity of communion, in opposition to the holiness of Christ's house. The first churches were congregations of saints ; but this evil influence was to mingle them with the world. Daniel, speaking of Antiochus, king of Syria, as a type of antichrist, describes him as giving the sanctuary, and the host, to be trodden under foot, and polluting the sanctuary, ch. viii. 1. And with this exactly corresponds, Rev. xi. 2. " But the court which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not ; for

it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months." We have a most clear and explicit account of this, given by Paul in the second epistle to Timothy, ch. iii. 1—6. "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come; for men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." This description, in general, exactly agrees with the account that Paul gives of the Gentile world, Rom. i. 18, &c. Wherein then did the peculiar evil and danger of the last times consist? why, it lay in this, that men would have every wicked character, and at the same time be called Christians! It was this strange and horrid addition, that made the times perilous, "having a form of godliness."

A *third* most expressive feature of antichrist, is setting aside, even in Christ's name, his own laws, and establishing the inventions of men. Daniel speaks of him, chap. vii. 25. in this way, "He shall speak great words against the Most High, and think to change times and laws." And Paul thus sets forth the peculiar character of this power, 2 Thess. ii. 4. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God."

A *fourth* mark of antichrist at his *height*, is alliance with the state; and, by virtue of this connection, possessing worldly glory, pomp, and power, in opposition

to the nature of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world, and to the mean and despised appearance of its subjects. Rev. xvii. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, 12, 13, 15, 17. thus describes Babylon the great, "Come hither, I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters; with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet-coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads, and ten horns; and the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: and the ten horns which thou sawest, are ten kings, which receive power as kings one hour with the beast; these have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast: and the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues; for God hath put in their hearts (*i. e.* of the ten kings) to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled *."

The *last* feature I shall mention, is intolerance, and the spirit of persecution. Daniel shows that this power would "wear out the saints of the Most High," chap. vii. 25.; and John, Revelation, chap. xvii. describing the false church, "saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs

* When the false church is said to commit fornication with the kings of the earth; it implies, that while she professes herself the spouse of Christ, she yet derives her establishment, protection, power, and honours, from them.

of Jesus," ver. 6. This was in virtue of her connection with the state, to which she is represented as allied, Rev. xvii. 12, 13. while, at same time, she raised her head high above all earthly and civil power.

II. Keeping these features in view, let us consider where they are to be seen.

1. The different characters of antichrist, apply, in their full force, to the church of Rome ; she is **BABYLON THE GREAT**. In Rev. chap. xvii. she is described in such a way, as to make the application undoubted ; ver. 9. she is described as seated on seven mountains ; ver. 18. she is said to be that great city, which, when John wrote, reigned over the kings of the earth. Her seven well known different forms of government are spoken of, ver. 10. ; which were to issue in the Pope as the eighth head, ver. 11. ; and she is represented as bearing rule over ten kings, who had not yet come to their kingdoms, but whom Daniel, chap. vii. sets forth as arising out of the Western Empire ; compare Daniel vii. and Revelation xvii. There also can be no doubt, that the Pope is the little horn, foretold by Daniel ; and the man of sin, set forth by Paul. In the history, character, and genius of this church, all the characters of antichrist unite, and are to be seen in their highest pitch of horrid perfection. But,

2. We must make this charge, wherever the characters are seen. The corruption of Christianity had come to a great height, before the man of sin was formally revealed ; and the very title given the Roman church, "The mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth," leads us to look further, and to expect an extended and a baneful influence. We must bring home the charge of being her genuine daughters, against

all national churches ; and it would be happy for dissenters, if they could vindicate themselves from being polluted by her influence. The national church with which we are best acquainted, is the church of Scotland ; and when, pure as she is esteemed, we pitch upon her in support of the accusation, we do no injustice to the subject.

1. In the church of Scotland, we see the antichristian feature of corruption of doctrine. How rarely, in her, is the truth clearly preached !—the divinity of the Son of God—his perfect atonement for sin—justification by faith, without works. The common, and prevailing doctrine, is salvation by human merit and virtue, as her pulpits, weekly filled by the sons of Plato and Epictetus, can abundantly testify ; or, if faith is introduced, it is made something else than the belief of the truth, and as arduous an undertaking, as keeping the law.

But if it is said, that her standards of doctrine are pure ; I answer, that in them also the truth is partly covered and corrupted : for instance, it is said in the Shorter Catechism, immediately after the explication of the ten commandments, Question 84. *What doth every sin deserve ?* Answer, *Every sin deserveth God's wrath and curse, both in this life, and that which is to come.* And then instantly comes in, Question 85. *What doth God require of us, that we may escape his wrath and curse due to us for sin ?* and the answer is, *To escape the wrath and curse of God due to us for sin, God requireth of us, faith in Jesus Christ, repentance unto life, with the diligent use of all the outward means whereby Christ communicateth to us the benefits of redemption ;* and, in answer to Question 88. these outward means

are said to be, *the ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer ; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.* Compare this with the New Testament, and say, How does it agree with Christ having finished the work of man's redemption, John xix. 30. ; with his having made peace by the blood of his cross, Coloss. i. 20. ; with God the Father being well-pleased and satisfied with the work he has done in the room of sinners, Matt. xvii. 5. Heb. x. 5. &c. ; and to demonstrate which, he raised him from the dead, John xvi. 10. Heb. x. 11, 12. ? How does it agree with justification by faith alone, without works ? In answer to every question about the way of salvation, Christ and his apostles answered, in a word, BELIEVE. When the Jews say to Christ, " What shall we do that we might work the works of God ? " His answer is, " This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent," John vi. 28, 29. And when the Jailor at Philippi said to Paul and Silas, " Sirs, what must I do to be saved ? " they answered, " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," Acts xvi. 30, 31.

In the Shorter Catechism, also, a very false view is given of saving faith. It is said, in answer to Question 86. *Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.* But the New Testament sets forth saving faith to be the belief of the gospel, upon God's testimony. Mark xvi. 15, 16. " Preach the gospel to every creature ; he that believeth shall be saved."—John iii. 33. " He that receiveth his testimony, hath set to his seal, that God is true."—2 Thess. ii. 13. " God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through belief of the truth."—1 John v. 9, 10. " If we receive the witness (or rather testimony)

of men, the witness of God is greater ; for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself : he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

When the New Testament sets forth salvation by faith, it turns our whole attention to the truth believed ; and never speaks of any of the effects springing from faith. Its language is, " Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt : but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," Romans iv. 4, 5. " And by grace are ye saved, through faith ; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God : not of works, lest any man should boast," Ephes. ii. 8, 9. But the account given in the Catechism, in the best view of it, confounds faith with its effects, and makes a definition, by blending them together. Must not this lead men away from the saving truth about Christ's work, to their own hearts, and a work of faith there ? and eminently promote their establishing their own righteousness, by their own endeavours and efforts ? Besides, where do we read in the New Testament of *Christ being offered to us in the gospel* ? This way of speaking, eminently tends to perplex men's ideas. It is true, indeed, that the testimony of the gospel is held forth to all men, to be believed, while the highest evidence is given of its truth ; and sinners are called to give credit to it as the word of God : but this is very different from the offer of Christ, as set forth in the Catechism, and from the ministerial offer supposed to be founded on this, to which, in the Catechism, there is *an especial reference*.

are said to be, *the ordinances, especially the word, sacraments, and prayer ; all which are made effectual to the elect for salvation.* Compare this with the New Testament, and say, How does it agree with Christ having finished the work of man's redemption, John xix. 30. ; with his having made peace by the blood of his cross, Coloss. i. 20. ; with God the Father being well-pleased and satisfied with the work he has done in the room of sinners, Matt. xvii. 5. Heb. x. 5. &c. ; and to demonstrate which, he raised him from the dead, John xvi. 10. Heb. x. 11, 12. ? How does it agree with justification by faith alone, without works ? In answer to every question about the way of salvation, Christ and his apostles answered, in a word, BELIEVE. When the Jews say to Christ, " What shall we do that we might work the works of God ? " His answer is, " This is the work of God, that ye believe in him whom he hath sent," John vi. 28, 29. And when the Jailor at Philippi said to Paul and Silas, " Sirs, what must I do to be saved ? " they answered, " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," Acts xvi. 30, 31.

In the Shorter Catechism, also, a very false view is given of saving faith. It is said, in answer to Question 86. *Faith in Jesus Christ is a saving grace, whereby we receive and rest upon him alone for salvation, as he is offered to us in the gospel.* But the New Testament sets forth saving faith to be the belief of the gospel, upon God's testimony. Mark xvi. 15, 16. " Preach the gospel to every creature ; he that believeth shall be saved."—John iii. 33. " He that receiveth his testimony, hath set to his seal, that God is true."—2 Thess. ii. 13. " God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through belief of the truth."—1 John v. 9, 10. " If we receive the witness (or rather testimony)

of men, the witness of God is greater; for this is the witness of God, which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God, hath made him a liar, because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

When the New Testament sets forth salvation by faith, it turns our whole attention to the truth believed; and never speaks of any of the effects springing from faith. Its language is, "Now to him that worketh, is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt: but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness," Romans iv. 4, 5. "And by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast," Ephes. ii. 8, 9. But the account given in the Catechism, in the best view of it, confounds faith with its effects, and makes a definition, by blending them together. Must not this lead men away from the saving truth about Christ's work, to their own hearts, and a work of faith there? and eminently promote their establishing their own righteousness, by their own endeavours and efforts? Besides, where do we read in the New Testament of *Christ being offered to us in the gospel*? This way of speaking, eminently tends to perplex men's ideas. It is true, indeed, that the testimony of the gospel is held forth to all men, to be believed, while the highest evidence is given of its truth; and sinners are called to give credit to it as the word of God: but this is very different from the offer of Christ, as set forth in the Catechism, and from the ministerial offer supposed to be founded on this, to which, in the Catechism, there is *an especial reference*.

In this also, as in every national church, the doctrine of the kingdom of heaven is laid aside, and a kind of Judaism is set up; while the Jewish nation is proposed as a pattern for Christian nations, in direct opposition to Christ's testimony; "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but *now* is my kingdom not from hence," John xviii. 36.

The confession of faith, ch. 25. after giving a definition of the Catholic, or universal invisible church, proceeds thus: *The visible church which is also Catholic or universal under the gospel, is not confined to one nation, as before, under the law; but consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God.* Here is the foundation of national Christianity; but it is a foundation not laid in the New Testament. We there read, indeed, of the universal invisible church, of all the saints in heaven and earth, termed *ecclesia*, or congregation, in reference to their being at last all gathered into one place with Christ their Head: but besides this, we read of no other *ecclesia*, church, or congregation of Christians, but such as met in one place for worship, in Rome, Corinth, Ephesus, Thessalonica, &c. all which were complete churches in themselves, and governed by their own council of Rulers or Presbyters. I turn the issue of this point, with confidence, upon the New Testament, which alone can decide it.

2. In the church of Scotland, as in every national church, there must be impurity of communion. The reformation made no difference here. Is there not as clear a fulfilment of 2 Tim. iii. 1. &c. in Protestant,

as in Popish countries? Men are in all respects wicked, and yet are professed Christians; they have a form of godliness; they are admitted to ordinances esteemed the most sacred. Is not then the sanctuary, in this case, still polluted, and trodden under foot?

3. In all national churches, there is a remarkable manifestation of this part of the character of antichrist, "thinking to change times and laws." The church of Scotland cannot acquit herself of this heavy charge; or clear herself from this special mark of Babylon.—Consult her national standards, and let them bear witness against her. How many things are *there* to be found, in direct opposition to the word of God! For example, the doctrine of a visible Catholic church of Christian nations; the whole affair of kirk-sessions, presbyteries, and synods; the power of Christian magistrates respecting the church, which had no place till the time of Constantine; while the plainest and most important things in the New Testament, are scarcely mentioned, or altogether omitted,—the great commandment of brotherly love, laying up treasures in heaven, and taking up the cross and following Christ here, in the patient hope of reigning with him hereafter.

Is not the ancient separation of Christ's disciples from the world set aside, and national Christianity introduced? Has not infant sprinkling usurped the place of the appointed baptism of believers? Where now is the weekly communion of the saints in the Lord's Supper, sanctioned by the same example as keeping the Lord's day? Acts xx. 7. And what authority is it, that has loosed the Gentile converts from the solemn ordinance against eating blood, and things strangled, imposed on them at Jerusalem, as we read, Acts xv. and declared to be binding, till the coming of Christ, in Rev.

ii. 20, 24, 25. ? If the church of Scotland has not first raised her hand, in these respects, yet has she followed the sacrilegious example of Rome, and proved herself her daughter and follower. Does not then this daughter of Babylon, also think to change times and laws? and does not she also sit in the temple of God, or Christ's professed church, exalting herself above the Mighty Lord, while, with a bold and impious hand, she pulls down his commandments, and establishes her own laws and traditions in their place?

4. Is not the church of Scotland allied to the state? which indeed is essentially connected with a national establishment; is not *she* also established by human laws? and supported by earthly power? And although she cannot boast of the same riches, pomp and splendour, which adorn the national religion in some other countries; yet can she hold out to her votaries, the rewards of sounding titles, pre-eminence, and popular estimation*.

* To behold the church of Scotland in her glory, or anti-christ in this country rearing his highest head; observe the annual proceedings in the month of May! while, amid the ranks of armed men, is to be seen the representative of earthly majesty, parading with the sons of the church, in solemn procession; and then seated on a gilded throne, in the assembly of the clergy! Compare this, ye admirers of religious establishments, with the appearance of Christ and his apostles; and say, if it bears most resemblance to the meek and lowly Man of sorrows, and his rude, though faithful followers; or to that woman, who "was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls, with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication," and who is "the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters†."

† Compare the above mentioned procession with Christ's entry into Jerusalem, Matt. xxi. 1—17.

5. Can the church of Scotland vindicate herself from the charge of an intolerant and persecuting spirit? I speak not of the private sentiments of the present generation of her clergy; born and educated in a free country, and a liberal age, they have, I trust, many of them, imbibed the precious ideas of liberty and toleration; in this respect, even the clergy of Rome, in many countries, are now materially changed:—but I speak of the constitution of the church, and her history and character, even in her most boasted times of Presbyterian purity. Are her standards free from the spirit of intolerance? The confession of faith, chap. 20. section 4. declares, *that opinions, and practices, contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship or conversation; or to the power of godliness; or such erroneous opinions or practices, as, either in their own nature, or in the manner of publishing or maintaining them, are destructive to the external peace and order which Christ hath established in his church; may lawfully be called to account, and proceeded against by the censures of the church, and by the power of the civil magistrate.*

What appearance did the church of Scotland make in, the time of covenanting fury? what pains and penalties did not she prepare, for all who would not join in her solemn league? And when milder and more auspicious times succeeded, and the act of toleration had delivered the inhabitants of this happy country from the fury and pride of priests; did not the national assembly of the clergy, to their eternal shame, remonstrate against that law, which put it out of their power to oppress and harrass their fellow creatures, under the pre-

tence of that religion, the peculiar character of which is love and benevolence*?

The features then of antichrist, are not only to be seen in the church of Rome, but also in other national churches, and in all religious societies following their example, as far as they can do, consistently with their being dissenters.

III. Let us briefly illustrate the call to the people of God: "Come out of her."

1. It is the call of the MOST HIGH; therefore every fearer of the Lord ought to obey with trembling.

2. True happiness is connected with it; God's people are here called out of captivity, to the enjoyment of their ancient privileges. See Isaiah lii. 11. 2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.

3. Regard to their own safety, ought to produce obedience to this call. The argument is, "That ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." Babylon is devoted to utter destruction: while God's people remain in her, the last stroke of vengeance is delayed. But all, whatever are their pretensions, who are found connected with her when Christ her Judge shall come, must inevitably share in her ruin and destruction.

Finally, I would call the attention of all professing Christians to Rev. xiv. 6. &c.

This passage sets forth the second promulgation of the apostolic gospel, termed here, *the everlasting*, as tri-

* It is the lamentation of the people called Seceders, to this day, though dissenters! that they are not possessed of this extirpating power; such is the genius of that party: yet I trust that, even they, have not been able fully to shut out the milder beams of the end of the eighteenth century.

umphing over the power and policy of its foes. This took place, in the translation of the Scriptures ; and the preaching of men enlightened in the knowledge of them.

The call connected with this preaching, is, *Fear God. Give him glory. Worship him.*

This is in opposition to fearing antichrist, giving him glory, and worshipping him, ver. 9, 10. 2 Thess. ii. 4.

The argument is, "The hour of his judgment is come." This is the judgment on Babylon, ver. 8. ; not the final judgment on her, but its prelûde, by the way of warning, Daniel vii. 26. 2 Thess. ii. 8

Let then God's people flee from Babel's bondage ; let them attend to the call, "Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence ; touch no unclean thing, go ye out of the midst of her, be ye clean." And when they depart, let them in solemn triumph, raise the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb ; saying, "Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty ; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints : Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name ? for thou only art holy ; for all nations shall come and worship before Thee, for thy judgments are made manifest."

Amen.

A

Call to the People of God,

TO COME OUT OF

B A B Y L O N.

REVELATION xviii. 4.*

And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

THE Revelation of John contains the history of the kingdom of the Lord Jesus, not only till the period when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord, and of his Christ, but even to the time of the resurrection of the just.

It also contains the important, interesting, though

* This discourse was printed in the Edinburgh Evangelical Magazine for October 1804, a short time after it was delivered. The reader will observe that it is on the same subject as the preceding, but the manner in which it is handled being so different, it was thought proper to reprint both discourses.

melancholy history, of the opposition and devices of the prince of hell, against the kingdom and people of the Lord, under the assumed mask of religion ; while it delineates the rise and progress, character and influence, consumption and final destruction of that wicked power, which is set forth in the word of God under the names of Antichrist, the Man of Sin, and Babylon.

It is in the immediate view of the awful destruction of this ungodly power, that the Most High utters this voice, " Come out of her my people."

Although it is said in the context, " Babylon the great is fallen ;" and in chapter xix. 2. " He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication ;" yet we cannot understand these expressions as denoting, that final destruction had yet overtaken her, but only that severe judgments had gone forth, clearly portending her approaching ruin.

Indeed the Scriptures set forth a series of judgments upon that power, issuing in irretrievable destruction. Daniel describes in magnificent language, a council of judgment erected in heaven, with a peculiar relation to these important transactions, and at which the Ancient of Days himself was to preside. " The Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool ; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued, and came forth from before him : thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him : the judgment was set, and the books were opened. I beheld then, because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake ; I beheld even till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame," Daniel vii. 9. &c. And in ver. 26. it is added : " The

judgment shall sit, and they shall take away his dominion, to consume and to destroy it to the end." This exactly agrees with the words of Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 8. "and then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

In the *first* place, let us consider from what situation the people of God are so earnestly called to remove.

John the Baptist, the forerunner of the Messiah, proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven was at hand; and when Christ was examined upon this subject before Pontius Pilate, He answered, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is my kingdom not from hence. Pilate therefore said unto him, Art thou a king, then? Jesus answered, Thou sayest, that I am a king; to this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

The apostles commissioned by Jesus Christ, preached the *truth*, or the gospel, and subjects were born to this kingdom by the incorruptible seed of the word: wherever the gospel was attended with success, the disciples of Christ were associated, and the kingdom of the Lord Jesus was visible in the congregations of the saints.

But even in the apostolic age, there were too evident symptoms appearing of that corruption which was afterwards to overwhelm the religion and kingdom of Christ. The apostle Paul says, 2 Thess. ii. 7. "The mystery of iniquity doth already work." And the apostle John says, 1 John ii. 18. "As ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists."

It would appear, that in the apostolic age, every Chris-

tian congregation, however small, was governed by a plurality of leaders, Acts xiv. 23. who are chiefly distinguished in the Holy Scriptures by the appellation of *elders*, and *bishops* or *overseers*. These teachers and presidents were chosen by each congregation, from such as were most eminent in the Christian profession. To them was committed the oversight of the church; and their character and conduct are thus set forth by Peter: "Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock*," 1 Peter v. 2. &c.

As appears from the directions given by Paul to Timothy, the persons thus elected are in general supposed to have passed the meridian of life, and frequently to have reared and brought up a family of children, before they were chosen to fill this situation; and we have reason to think, that most of the primitive elders still continued to exercise their worldly employments; it is certain that the Ephesian elders are exhorted to do so by the apostle Paul in these remarkable words: "I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel; yea, you yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto

* It is evident from the character of the elder, as drawn by Paul in his epistles to Timothy and Titus, that every elder must be a public teacher. There is no such character in the word of God, as a ruling elder in distinction from a preaching elder, although one elder may be more eminent in ruling, and another in teaching. It is not from insisting on gifts for teaching being necessary, that some congregations come short of the scriptural order, but from their supposing that all their elders ought to be exempted from following any worldly employment for their support.

my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you in all things, how that *so labouring ye ought to support the weak*, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, *It is more blessed to give than to receive,*" Acts xx. 33. &c.

It is needless to conceal what is too evident, that it was by the ministers of the word that the fatal corruption of Christianity was introduced, by their giving way to covetousness and pride, and affecting to imitate the priests among the Jews and Gentiles, not only in their dress and manners, but even in their doctrine and sentiments. In all this was fatally fulfilled the complaint of God with respect to the pastors of his ancient people Israel: "My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray: they have turned them away on the mountains: they have gone from mountain to hill: they have forgotten their resting-place," Jer. l. 6.

Antichrist, from his first commencement to his highest degree of glory and prosperity, and particularly at this latter period, is distinguished in Scripture by the following characters:

1st, By corruption of doctrine. Peter writes, 2 Ep. ii. 1. &c. "But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. And through covetousness shall they, with feigned words, make merchandize of you, whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."

2d, Impurity of communion, by mixing the people

of God with the world, in the most sacred religious ordinances. The apostle Paul, giving a view of the last times, thus describes them : “ This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good ; traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God ; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof : from such turn away,” 2 Tim. iii. 1. &c.

It was not merely men possessing the various wicked characters enumerated in this passage, that was to render those last times perilous in distinction from the times that then existed. So far from this being the case, the same apostle, in still higher colours, paints the enormities of his own age, Rom. i. The thing that rendered these times perilous, was this singular and melancholy trait, that men would have all these characters, and yet call themselves Christians, *having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.*

3d, Antichrist was to be distinguished by teaching the fear of God by the precepts of men, by setting aside the laws of Christ and substituting laws of his own, as it were, in Christ's kingdom. In that noted chapter of Daniel already referred to, that power is thus characterized : “ He shall think to change times and laws.” And this part of his character is further explained by the apostle Paul, 2 Thess. ii. 4. who, when speaking of that power, says, “ who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped ; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” Every power who

takes upon him to set aside the laws of the Most High, and to substitute laws of his own, may with great justice be said to exalt himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped.

4th, Antichrist is distinguished by bearing lordly rule. Daniel thus describes him, chap. vii. ver. 8. : " I considered the horns, and behold there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns plucked up by the roots : and behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of a man, and a mouth speaking great things."

5th, Antichrist is also characterized by the persecution of the people of God, and leading them into captivity. He is described, Dan. ch. xii. ver. 7. as scattering the power of the holy people ; and, chap vii. ver. 25. as wearing out the saints of the Most High.

We have a description of this power in its highest glory in the context, Rev. ch. xvii. ver. 1. " And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, come hither, I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters : with whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the Spirit into the wilderness : and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. And the woman was arrayed in purple, and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand, full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication. And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, and abominations of the earth. And I saw the woman

drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: And when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration."

There can be no doubt with respect to the precise application of the monstrous and unnatural power which is here described, and at which, while the apostle John beheld it in prophetic vision, he wondered with great admiration; for we are informed, in the 18th verse of the chapter, "The woman which thou sawest is that great city which reigneth over the kings of the earth."

That circumstance, independently of many others which it is impossible at present to advert to, points out with infallible precision, the city of Rome, the then mistress of the known world, and whose singular fate it was to rule over the kings of the earth, under spiritual pretexts, after her earthly dominion had been overthrown.

But what person, conversant with the word of God, or the profession of Christianity among men, will confine the characters of antichrist to the church of Rome? She is indeed Babylon the great, but she is represented as the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

Will it be said, for instance, that all these characters do not apply nearly with equal force to the Greek church, that sink of corruption, both in doctrine and manners, and which in almost every thing has equalled the worst of the abominations of the church of Rome?

Can we free Protestant national churches, and even many dissenting bodies, from partaking of these characters, or being fatally polluted with this leaven? Wherever we find the gospel corrupted, the people of God confounded with the world, the laws of Christ set aside, and the commandments of men imposed, the

lordly rule and authority of teachers over the conscience, and a spirit of disaffection to those that keep the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus, *there* we see the character of antichrist ; and from every such communion the people of God are called to separate.

In the *second* place, Let us consider the people that are here addressed. It is not the antichristian worshippers, having a form of godliness without the power of it : The Lord himself thus characterizes them, *my people*.

Such are here supposed to be living in communion with Babylon and her daughters.

The Lord owns them as his people ; he loves them, and is tenderly interested for their welfare ; he calls them to come out of Babylon, in order to promote their best interests, and to save them from manifold distress. It is clear, then, that the word of God describes true Christians as seduced by Babylon and her daughters, and led captive ; nay, it sets them forth even as within the communion of the church of Rome, the great Babylon, and *that* immediately before the ultimate stroke of divine vengeance.

But we must not from these considerations too much bring down the Christian character. Such Christians as are even in Babylon, must surely possess less or more the distinguishing features of the people of God. They must be enlightened in the account that the word of God gives of human corruption and depravity ; be convinced that they are sinners under the curse of the law, and that they can do nothing for their own recovery. They must believe the gospel of Christ, or the testimony of God concerning his Son, the dignity of his person, the sufficiency of his sacrifice for sin, and the salvation of the guilty by faith without works. They

must love the truth, glory in the cross of Christ, and count all things but loss for the excellent knowledge of him. They must obey the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren. Without this, the knowledge of Christ cannot dwell in any heart. The Son of man in the last day will not acknowledge any professors of religion as his brethren who have not been engaged in the works of brotherly love. They must be subject to Christ as their Lord and King, and faithful in their allegiance to him, *so far as they are enlightened to know his word*: And, finally, they must be a holy people, purified from evil affections and worldly lusts; for without holiness no man shall see the Lord; and if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

With all this, many of them may in a great degree be ignorant of the beautiful simplicity of the truth; perplexed and misled by false doctrine, they may incautiously adopt expressions, which may have a natural tendency to obscure the freeness of divine grace, and even have their minds leavened by sentiments, that have the effect of marring their consolation in the gospel, and of engendering desponding fears, and a spirit of bondage.

They must, while they honestly continue in Babylon, be ignorant of the spiritual nature of the kingdom of Christ, and of many of his laws and commandments, particularly those which respect the churches and the social state of Christians*.

This darkness in the people of God in the antichris-

* The above view of the essential character of the people of God, even in Babylon, will show how ill founded that charity is which is so much commended.

tian societies, may be accounted for in different ways. They are seduced by the prejudices of education ; they have always been taught to consider the connection in which they are placed, as the true church of Christ ; they were in that situation born again by the incorruptible seed of the word ; they have there enjoyed, in some degree, the consolation of the gospel ; and they have been taught to affix a meaning to the Scriptures, consistent with the idea of the church with which they are connected being the church of God, while they may bewail at the same time her backslidings and apostasies.

In these views, they are fortified by the example of others. They are surrounded by many whom they esteem the servants of Christ ; and when they may be ready to distrust their own judgment, they are strengthened and supported by the opinion and encouragement of those whom they esteem ; and are thus detained in their connection by their high respect for the characters of eminent men, both dead and alive.

Now, I think, we may well conceive the people of God, in these circumstances, being thus misled, although we cannot say that their errors are not mixed with sin, while they have in their hands the word of God, which is suited to enlighten the eyes of the simple.

Let us think of the case of the apostles during Christ's personal ministry, until the pouring down of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost ; they, notwithstanding the doctrine of the prophets, and the repeated instructions of their Lord, were utterly disaffected to a suffering Messiah, and full of the idea of earthly power and glory. They say to Christ, even after his resurrection, " Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel ? "

This blindness of the apostles arose from their igno-

rance of a heavenly kingdom, and the deep rooted notions of the earthly reign of the Messiah. It was these preconceived notions that led them to misinterpret the Scriptures of the Old Testament; and is it not the same fatal delusion that seals the ignorance of God's people in Babylon, and, like a dark mist enveloping them, prevents them from discovering the glory of Messiah's kingdom? *They* also mistake the meaning of the Old Testament; they do not consider the Jewish church merely as a type, but in some respects as a model for Christian churches. They do not consider what the prophets say about the nations, as fulfilled in God taking out of them a people for his name, Acts ch. xv. ver. 14, &c. but as some way accomplished in national churches.

From what we have said of the character of the people of God, even in the antichristian and false churches, it is evident that they must be distinguished less or more; and how indeed can those lie altogether in obscurity whom God has turned out of darkness into his marvellous light, and from the power of Satan unto God? The people of God, in such connections, must surely have some knowledge of one another, and at least in some of these antichristian societies, as well as in many others which can scarcely be called antichristian, but which come short of the principles and order of the churches described in the Testaments, the true lovers of God may, in consequence of knowledge and acquaintance, be also distinguished, according as opportunity offers, by particular Christians who are following the pattern of the churches of God that in Judea were in Christ Jesus.

In the *third* place, the great duty of the people of God is here inculcated, "Come out of her my people,

that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." At the period of this call, the hour of the final destruction of Babylon approaches, and they are admonished to regard the call of the Most High, and to disregard every human authority, however venerable it may be esteemed. See Rev. xiv. 7.

The arguments for obedience to this call are most important. It is said, "that ye be not partakers of her sins." After God appears in his glory, building up Zion; when the New Testament kingdom is again preached to men; after the disciples begin to gather in the churches, and to build again the old wastes, and repair the desolations of many generations; and when the judgments of God upon Babylon concur with and explain his word; the Lord's people are in a peculiar manner sinners by remaining any longer in that ungodly connection; and they are roused also by this additional consideration, "that ye receive not of her plagues;" they are to flee as Lot fled from Sodom, and to seek the Lord as a sanctuary in the dwelling places of Mount Zion.

In the *fourth* place, the churches of Christ, and all among them as they have opportunity, ought to enforce this solemn call to the Lord's people, to free themselves from Babel's bondage.

1st, Affectionately. God owns them as his people; their enjoying this interesting character is the motive to comply with the call. We ought not, therefore, to reproach their ignorance, but endeavour to enlighten their minds; why should there be no affection to such as we have any reason to esteem Christians; no friendly correspondence so far as this may be practicable? It is true, that in a church capacity, we can only, in general terms, enforce in our doctrine this solemn appeal to those

that may be the people of the Lord ; but the observation I have made, will fully apply to the private communications, instructions, and influence of the members of the churches.

I have been for some years convinced, that there is a material error here, while I know and acknowledge how difficult it is to avoid it.

If we consider the history of the independent churches, in this country, for the space of between seventy and eighty years, we may see the rise and progress of this error, and its baneful influence in many important respects.

The first class of those churches in Scotland, proceeded at their outset upon other principles: newly emancipated from the bondage of Babylon, rejoicing in the simple and cheering views they had obtained of the grace of Christ, and hungering and thirsting after the word of God ; they earnestly invited the Lord's people to become partakers in the kingdom and patience of the Lord Jesus ; and their affectionate zeal was rewarded by considerable fruits. But they too soon stopt short in this career, and adopted other views. Although they continued to admit that the people of God were in Babylon, yet they generally denied that they were visible, and, while they too often accompanied this admission, with throwing ridicule upon all persons in other connections, having a strict profession of godliness, it seemed to make it entirely vain, and even inconsistent with itself, as among such persons, surely, and not the profane, must the Christians in Babylon be found.

I am infinitely attached to the grand principles upon which these churches set out. I affectionately venerate the memory of some of their leaders, and highly approve of that honest severity with which they exposed

the various arts by which the glorious gospel has been darkened by the antichristian teachers. I respect these churches still, and have a great regard for many among them ; but, had I their ear, I would solemnly demand their attention to this important question, Whether their appearance as a party has not assumed a striking similarity to that of the church of Laodicea, as delineated by our Lord, which said, *I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing ?*

The error that I am now lamenting, I fairly admit may partly arise from the abuse of good principles, such as keeping at a distance from antichrist, attachment to apostolic Christianity, and the fear of encouraging professed Christians in sin ; but it may partly proceed also from disguised spiritual pride, and self-righteousness. It may appear strange to suppose a spirit of self-righteousness in those who continually confess that they are the chief of sinners, and affect to distinguish themselves from every other class by an unqualified dependence upon the righteousness of Christ alone : But I am not much moved by this seeming inconsistency ; for the heart of man is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things ; who can know it ? We find certain persons thus characterized in the days of our Lord. *They trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others.* Now I lay down this as a most certain maxim, that every person who *despises* others on account of their ignorance of divine truth, and want of adherence to it in their conduct, has imbibed a self-righteous spirit, whatever speculative notions he may have about divine grace, and however much he may value himself upon such notions. How in the nature of things can it be otherwise ? If I am fully convinced that I am a poor undone sinner, deserving eternal mi-

sery, and that in my flesh there dwelleth no good thing ; if I believe that Christ came to save the lost, and redeemed them to God by his own blood ; if I believe that the guilty are justified by giving credit to this without any good thought or work to recommend them ; and that, if I know this truth, and rejoice in it, it was sovereign mercy alone that enlightened my mind, and bestowed that faith which is the gift of God, how can I despise any person because he is totally or partially in darkness ? I may well pity such, instruct them, and pray for them ; but I cannot surely despise them.

Brethren, let us guard against such a spirit. The example of the class of churches I have already mentioned, and some parts of their publications, though highly valuable in other respects, have had a very bad influence far beyond their own pale. Let us avoid therefore an uncandid state of mind. While I say so, I do not however mean to insinuate, that we are chiefly to blame for the shy reserve, that so much appears between us and those making a singular profession of Christianity in other religious connections ; for I have seen and experienced, that such persons have been anxious to avoid us, and that the wide extent of their charitable embrace, has often refused to comprehend those, who, wholly separated from antichristian connections, are endeavouring strictly to keep the commandments of God, and to hold the faith of Jesus.

2dly, We must enforce this call of God faithfully ; there must be no going back in our hearts to Babylon, in order to bring God's people out ; we must widely distinguish betwixt this power itself, and the Lord's people led captive by it ; the *first* is the object of God's hatred, jealous resentment, and severest wrath ; the *second*, of his love, pity, and care. We are not to dis-

guise this infinite opposition of the false church to the kingdom of Christ, in the vain expectation of gaining a more ready ear; we are not to instil the flattering idea that men may still appear to be the people of God while they reject his word, after being instructed in what it requires; for we have no such idea of a Christian in the New Testament; and if we are conversant with that book, we will be fully persuaded, that a man may appear to be very religious and devout, and yet be ignorant of, or even violently disaffected to, the gospel, kingdom, and commandments of Jesus Christ.

We must not, from the conviction that the people of God in Babylon are partially enlightened, have a less interesting view of the importance of every one of Christ's commandments, however generally opposed or set aside by religious people. And we dare not sacrifice the least jot of divine truth, or the smallest commandment of the Lord, to smooth the way to the communion of the churches, or to sooth the prejudices, or humour the ignorance, of any person whatever.

Some persons have been ready to argue in the following manner:—Christians in Babylon are ignorant of this, that, and the other thing in the word of God; therefore these things must be of little importance, and ought to be matters of forbearance in the churches of Christ. There cannot be more profane reasoning than this; I dare say it has eminently promoted the denial of the people of God being visible in Babylon, by such as rather chose to cut the Gordian knot than to untie it. I would ask such reasoners, Would they forbear in the churches such as denied the church of Rome to be antichristian? Yet this must be denied by such of the people of God as are in Babylon the Great. Ought the churches with us to forbear the practice of the baptism

of infants? Yet this, it will be admitted, is held and practised by a great many of the fearers of God. Surely the ignorance of the people of God in Babylon can be no rule for Christians. It would be strange indeed if darkness in place of light were to guide them. The churches of Christ, as distinguished from the antichristian apostasy, are set forth as keeping the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ, Rev. ch. xii. ver. 17.; and every disciple in the churches ought to tremble at that saying of Christ, Matt. v. 19. "Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven."

The churches of Christ can turn their eyes upon Babylon only with abhorrence, and not for example; upon the people of God led captive there with affectionate commiseration, but not with approbation. They are to keep their garments undefiled, to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, and to teach and enforce, according to their light, every doctrine and commandment of the kingdom of heaven.

In fine, if the churches were to make the darkness and ignorance of the people of God in antichristian connections their rule of forbearance; instead of being cities set upon a hill, to show the light; instead of being pillars upon which the truth is engraved, and by which it is supported; instead of being representations of the whole church of the redeemed in heaven and earth, and the dwelling places of Mount Zion, from which are to proceed the gospel, kingdom, and laws of Jesus; they would quickly become the

most degenerate, corrupt, and nauseous societies upon the face of the earth, and be finally sunk in the very lowest dregs of the antichristian apostasy.

If any of the people of God, dwelling with the daughter of Babylon, now chance to hear me, let me beseech them to attend to this solemn call, given by the Lord of heaven and earth, and flee out of Babylon, and deliver their souls.

SERMON,

PROVING FROM

THE WORD OF GOD,

THE ALL IMPORTANT DOCTRINE OF THE
GODHEAD OF JESUS CHRIST.

PREACHED IN THE BAPTIST MEETING-HOUSE, EDIN^R.
MARCH 18. 1792.

1 TIMOTHY iii. 16.

*And without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God
was manifest in the flesh.*

I MEAN at present to prove and establish, from the word of God, the important doctrine of the true and proper Deity of Jesus Christ; and, on considering the subject, I could not think of a more fit and convincing manner of setting it forth, than to show and demonstrate, that every name, property, and work, by which the true God stands distinguished from his creatures, are ascribed to Jesus Christ; and also, that worship which is due to God only. To this we shall proceed without further preamble.

I. The peculiar names of the Supreme Being are applied to Jesus Christ.

1. He is frequently called God, both in the Old Testament and in the New. It is written in Isaiah xxxv. 4, 5, 6. "Say to them that are of a fearful heart, be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompence, he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing: for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert." Christ evidently appears to apply this to himself in Luke vii. 19—24. "And John, calling unto him two of his disciples, sent them unto Jesus, saying, art thou he that should come, or look we for another? When the men were come unto him, they said, John Baptist hath sent us unto thee, saying, art thou he that should come, or look we for another? And in that same hour he cured many of their infirmities and plagues, and of evil spirits, and unto many that were blind he gave sight. Then Jesus answering, said unto them, go your way, and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached. And blessed is he whosoever shall not be offended in me." It is declared in Isaiah xl. 3, 9, 10. "The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a high way for our God. O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength: lift it up, be not afraid: say unto the cities of Judah, behold your God. Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work

before him." Now this is expressly applied by the evangelists to Jesus. See Mark i. 2, 3, 4. 7. "As it is written in the prophets, behold I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee. The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance, for the remission of sins. And preached, saying, there cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose."

In the New Testament also his godhead is expressly set forth, John xx. 28. "And Thomas answered and said unto him, (*i. e.* Jesus), My Lord and my God." Acts xx. 28. Paul thus exhorts the Ephesian elders, "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." It is written, Hebrews i. 8. "Unto the Son he saith, thy throne, O God, is forever and ever;" and in 1 John iii. 16. "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us." And, not to multiply quotations, we have the explicit declaration of our text, "God was manifest in the flesh."

But farther, to fix down the sense in which he is called God, epithets and qualities are conjoined with that appellation, to show that he is so termed, in the most strict and proper sense, and in no loose, typical, or subordinate view. In Isaiah ix. 6. he is called "the mighty God;" which passage we will evidently see applies to Jesus, by comparing verses 1, 2. with Matt. iv. 13, &c. Romans ix. 5. he is set forth as "over all, God blessed for ever." And in Titus ii. 13. he is said to be "the great God." In Philip. ii. 5, 6. he is declar-

ed equal with the Father in these emphatic words, "Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God;" and in Isaiah xlv. 21, 22, 23. we have the following striking declaration of his supreme godhead: "There is no God else beside me, a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside me: look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." The application of this passage to Jesus of Nazareth is beyond all controversy; for thus it is written, Rom. xiv. 10, 11. "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Also in John i. 1, &c. he is declared to have been God in the beginning, and before any thing was made; and by comparing Psal. xcvi. 7. with Heb. i. 6. we see that every exalted intelligence, who, in a figurative or subordinate sense, might be termed gods, are commanded to worship him as their great and almighty Ruler, and this as opposed to all idolatry. Thus these passages run: "Confounded be all they that serve graven images, that boast themselves of idols: worship him all ye gods." Which the apostle cites thus, "And again, when he bringeth in the first-begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels of God worship him."

2. Jesus Christ is called JEHOVAH. This is surely a conclusive argument for his true godhead, and of his being so called we have the most convincing proof. In Isa. xl. 3. which we have already proved applies to Jee-

sus Christ, it is said, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, (*Hebrew*, Jehovah), make straight in the desert a highway for our God." Ver. 10. "Behold the Lord Jehovah will come with strong hand." Isaiah l. begins with these words, "Thus saith the Lord, (*Hebrew* Jehovah)." The same speaker declares, ver. 6. "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair: I hid not my face from shame and spitting." These passages are sufficient to establish this important point: many others might be quoted, as Isaiah vi. 1, 2, 3.; viii. 13.; xlv. 21.

3. He is set forth as the living and self-existent One. In Exodus iii. 13, 14. we have this account of the name of God: "And Moses said unto God, behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, the God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say unto me, what is his name? what shall I say unto them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Now, if we consult John viii. 58. we will see Jesus Christ applying this incommunicable name of the Lord of all to himself. When the Jews asked him, "Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I AM." He does not here merely mean to show, that He existed before Abraham; in which case he would have used the common grammatical expression *I was*; but when he adopts the style by which the God of Israel stood distinguished from every other being, it is easy to see his meaning; and it was well understood by the Jews: they took up stones to cast at him, as being, in their view, guilty of blasphemy; which could not, in their apprehension, have fol-

lowed from his simply declaring that he existed before Abraham, as many of them were willing to believe that he was one of the old prophets risen again; of which description there existed some before Abraham's day. In Isaiah xlv. 6. the Lord God thus distinguisheth himself: "Thus saith the Lord, the king of Israel, and his Redeemer, the Lord of hosts, I am the first, and I am the last, and besides me there is no God." Now, compare with this the declaration of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, Rev. i. 17, 18. "I am the first and the last, and the living One;" (for so this last appellation should be rendered.)

II. We observe, that the perfections and properties peculiar to God, are applied to Jesus Christ.

1. He is eternal. It is said of him, John i. 1, 2. "In the beginning was the Word."

2. He is almighty. In Rev. i. 8. he says, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." Some of these words he repeats in verse 11. And when John turned to see the voice that spake with him, he saw, verse 13. "one like unto the Son of man;" who again addresses him in the same style, verse 17. &c.

3. He is infinitely wise. Thus it is written, Col. ii. 3. "In whom (*i. e.* Christ) are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

4. He is omniscient. We see the solemn appeal made to him in this view, by the apostle Peter, recorded John xxi. 17. "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." And in Rev. ii. 23. Christ himself says, "All the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: And I

will give unto every one of you according to your works."

5. He is every where present. In Matt. xviii. 20. speaking of the discipline of his churches, he makes this promise, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." He declares, in Matt. xxviii. 20. with respect to his apostles, and such as are actively engaged in executing his commission, "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen." And when conversing with Nicodemus, he sets forth this truth in these words, "The Son of man which is in heaven," John iii. 13.

6. Is the Father infinitely holy? and thus addressed, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty?" so also is Jesus Christ; and thus in like manner is he addressed: Isaiah vi. 3. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory;" for this passage is applied to Jesus in John xii. 41. where the evangelist, narrating the message to Israel given by the Lord to the prophet, adds, "These things, said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him;" which, from the context, evidently refers to Jesus Christ. Thus also, in Daniel ix. 24. he is called, "the Most Holy;" and in the New Testament, "the Holy One."

7. To him belongs essential justice. He is emphatically styled, the Just God, Isaiah xlv. 21. and in the writings of the Evangelists, by way of pre-eminence, "the Just One."

8. The highest authority supports us in saying, that "there is none good but one, that is God." But Jesus Christ is set forth as essentially and infinitely gracious: it is said of him, John i. 14. "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld

his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." And he is declared to be the fountain of grace and mercy, even as God the Father, as 1 Tim. i. 2. "Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and Jesus Christ, our Lord."

III. The works of God are ascribed to Jesus Christ. Thus he could say of himself, as to every divine work from the beginning, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work."

1. Creating power sufficiently marks the true God. Thus the apostle Paul says of the Gentiles, Rom. i. 20, 21. "For the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse: because that when they knew God, they glorified him not as God."

Now, to Jesus Christ is creating power expressly and repeatedly applied, John i. 3. "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made." And in Heb. i. 10. to the Son it is said, "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands." Is not then every person to whom the word of God comes, without excuse in not confessing Christ Jesus, the Creator, as the true and mighty Jehovah?

2. He upholds all things. It is written, Col. i. 17. "By him all things consist;" and Heb. i. 3. he is set forth as "upholding all things by the word of his power."

3. Though men have frequently been the instruments of working miracles, yet they received this power from God, and performed them in his name. But Christ de-

clares, that in his name likewise his disciples should perform the most wonderful works. Mark xvi. 17, 18. "In my name shall they cast out devils, they shall speak with new tongues, they shall take up serpents, and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

4. It is the province of God alone to open the understanding: and Christ did this, as we see in Luke xxiv. 45. "Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."

5. The resurrection of the dead is ascribed to the power of Jesus, which is as peculiar to God as creation. It is written, John v. 28, 29. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." And Paul says of him, Philip. iii. 21. "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

6. He is the Judge of all the earth. And surely this character and work necessarily require the conjunction of almighty power, infinite wisdom, and the discernment of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Thus, in the view of that day, it is said, Rom. xiv. 10. 12. "We shall all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ.—So then every one of us shall give an account of himself to God."

IV. Divine worship is paid to him.

1. This he received, even in the days of his humili-

ation, when on earth. It is written, that the man that was born blind said unto him, "Lord, I believe; and he worshipped him;" John ix. 38.

2. He received it after he ascended; and that both from saints on earth, and from angels and saints in heaven.

The disciples on earth worshipped him. Thus it is recorded immediately after his ascension, Luke xxiv. 52. "and they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Stephen, the first martyr, called on Jesus in his dying moments: for it is said of him, Acts vii. 59. "they stoned Stephen, calling upon, (or invoking), and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Thus the words ought to be rendered; and they will read in this way, leaving out the supplement. Indeed believers are thus characterised: they are said to be such as call on Christ's name, Acts ix. 14.; and in Rom. x. 12, 13. it is written, "the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him: for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." The Lord's Supper also is instituted as a sacred ordinance in honour of him, and to his remembrance.

He, after his ascension, received solemn and divine worship from angels and saints in heaven. Rev. v. gives a grand account of this, representing, as it were, the solemnities of the inauguration of this King of Zion. It is written from ver. 8. "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts (or rather living creatures) and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every

kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that 'liveth for ever and ever.' It was at this grand period that Psalm xcvi. was fulfilled, in which, ver. 7. a command is given to the highest created intelligences to worship the King Messiah : " Worship him, all ye gods ;" for so is this passage applied, in Heb. i. 6. " And again, when he bringeth his first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."

I have now completed the plan I proposed ; and, I think, can say with truth, that I have fully proved, from the Scriptures of truth, that every name, perfection and work, by which we can distinguish the true God from the creatures of his hand, are ascribed to Jesus Christ ; and likewise that worship given him, which it would be idolatry to bestow on another than the Lord of Hosts. The conclusion then is clear and obvious,

ation, when on earth. It is written, that the man that was born blind said unto him, " Lord, I believe ; and he worshipped him ;" John ix. 38.

2. He received it after he ascended ; and that both from saints on earth, and from angels and saints in heaven.

The disciples on earth worshipped him. Thus it is recorded immediately after his ascension, Luke xxiv. 52. " and they worshipped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Stephen, the first martyr, called on Jesus in his dying moments : for it is said of him, Acts vii. 59. " they stoned Stephen, calling upon, (or invoking), and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Thus the words ought to be rendered ; and they will read in this way, leaving out the supplement. Indeed believers are thus characterised : they are said to be such as call on Christ's name, Acts ix. 14. ; and in Rom. x. 12, 13. it is written, " the same Lord over all, is rich unto all that call upon him : for whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." The Lord's Supper also is instituted as a sacred ordinance in honour of him, and to his remembrance.

He, after his ascension, received solemn and divine worship from angels and saints in heaven. Rev. v. gives a grand account of this, representing, as it were, the solemnities of the inauguration of this King of Zion. It is written from ver. 8. " And when he had taken the book, the four beasts (or rather living creatures) and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof : for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every

kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation ; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests : and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the living creatures, and the elders : and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands ; saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honour, and glory, and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever." It was at this grand period that Psalm xcvi. was fulfilled, in which, ver. 7. a command is given to the highest created intelligences to worship the King Messiah : " Worship him, all ye gods ;" for so is this passage applied, in Heb. i. 6. " And again, when he bringeth his first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him."

I have now completed the plan I proposed ; and, I think, can say with truth, that I have fully proved, from the Scriptures of truth, that every name, perfection and work, by which we can distinguish the true God from the creatures of his hand, are ascribed to Jesus Christ ; and likewise that worship given him, which it would be idolatry to bestow on another than the Lord of Hosts. The conclusion then is clear and obvious,

that He is the living and true God, in union with the Father and the Holy Spirit. I might have adduced a much greater number of passages from the word of God, to prove this important doctrine ; but as the texts I have quoted are quite sufficient for that purpose, to all that believe the word of God, I thought that my doing so would only lengthen out this discourse without answering any good end ; and I shall now conclude with one or two very short remarks.

1. We see how well established this grand truth is, from the universal voice of the word of God. Such as deny it, if honest men, ought to deny the Bible, for sure I am, they do not believe it. If Christ was not a divine person, it is obvious that he was an impostor : there is, and can be no medium here. When on earth he made himself equal with God, ascribed to himself divine works, received divine worship, and was addressed by the names peculiar to Jehovah of hosts. What would we think of a mere man doing and permitting all this ?

2. The whole beauty of the gospel, and salvation itself, depends on this truth. If Christ is not God, then his death can be no adequate atonement for the sins of men ; he is unable to save the guilty, and overthrow the power of death and hell. But, on the other hand, in these important views, how establishing and comforting is it, to know him as the Word made flesh.

3. How great is the sin of such as go about to pervert this truth, and turn away men's faith from it ! How ungrateful a conduct towards that Peerless One, who took on him the form of a servant ! A crime this, unknown in hell itself ! a conduct more daringly wicked than that of devils ! for all the tribes of evil spirits in

the infernal regions, know and confess Jesus as the Son of God, and the Almighty Saviour of mankind. How vain and foolish are the pretences assumed by these famous sons of wisdom! Poor worms of the dust cannot comprehend their Maker, and therefore they must needs deny him. But, do they know themselves? Can they explain the nature of the union of soul and body? Can they comprehend eternity? Can they, on the principles of reason, account for the resurrection? Must then these and such things be denied? One day, alas, all such must believe. Soon will the despised Saviour appear in the glory of the God of the whole earth; when all vile corrupters of the truth, and blasphemers of his name, shall shrink before his majestic and penetrating appearance, and receive the just sentence of condemnation from his lips. *Amen.*

SERMON,

PREACHED ON JUNE 17. 1802,

BEING THE DAY APPOINTED BY THE KING FOR
A GENERAL THANKSGIVING ON ACCOUNT
OF THE PEACE WITH FRANCE *.

PSALM CXXXvi. 1—5.

O give thanks unto the Lord; for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever. O give thanks unto the God of gods: for his mercy endureth forever. O give thanks to the Lord of lords: for his mercy endureth forever. To him who alone doth great wonders: for his mercy endureth forever. To him that by wisdom made the heavens: for his mercy endureth forever.

PRAISE and thanksgiving become us at all times as creatures, and still more as Christians. We see much of this spirit in the Psalms; see Psal. ciii. 1.—Christians are exhorted in every thing to give thanks, 1 Thess. v. 18. and to make their requests known with thanksgiving, Philip. iv. 6.

They are called both to pray and return thanks as to public matters, and those in which governments are interested, 1 Tim. ii. 1. &c. We have often fulfilled this duty by fasting and prayer in times of national calamity, and we are now called to praise God for having dispelled the storm that lowered over us. Much, at these

* This Sermon was found among the author's papers after his death, and printed in the Theological Repository for March 1808.

seasons, would we have prized an assurance that our prayers would be heard. It is surely then our duty fervently to join in thanksgiving to the Lord of lords this day.

Let us consider some of the things for which we return thanks.

1. The spirit which has desolated Europe for these last ten years, was levelled equally against the powers ordained of God on earth, and the throne of the Most High himself, a real and remarkable fulfilment of Luke xxi. 25, &c.

The specious but equivocal words of liberty and equality became the motto of desolation and blood, and scenes of horror took place, formerly unknown among civilized nations. The most unworthy and diabolical passions were gratified under the mask of patriotism, and all subordination and good order were condemned as aristocracy. A nation far advanced in refinement, glutted themselves in the blood of their rulers, and proceeded from an attack upon the throne of kings, to a yet more daring one on that of the Most High, not merely denying the truth of Christianity, but at one period boldly attacking the existence of God and of a future state.

The consequence of all this, as might have been expected, was a combination of kings, to quash these novel doctrines, and almost in every nation an alliance between the higher orders and the priesthood, which did not always act merely upon the defensive, or within the bounds of truth and moderation. Even in our own country the bonds of society were loosed, friends torn asunder, and a strong and unjust spirit of party almost universally reigned.

But now, that nation with whom these principles originated, deeply lament the madness which possessed them. I trust in so far as they ever gained footing here, they are totally exterminated from the breasts of our countrymen, and society has nearly regained its former situation, by the wisdom and moderation of our rulers, who have drowned out the ashes of dissention, in place of adding fuel to the flame, through the influence of Him "by whom kings rule, and princes decree justice."

2. The bloodshed, and scenes of misery and desolation, which these last ten years have exhibited, are perhaps without example in the annals of man; certainly without example in modern times. They may be compared with the slaughter at the destruction of Jerusalem, or at the subversion of the Roman Empire by the barbarous nations.

Could we have turned our eyes to the Rhine, or the banks of the Danube, where hostile armies contended for the existence of their nations; what melancholy scenes would they have exhibited! There did the hope of the husbandman perish by the destruction of his harvests. The quiet and peaceable inhabitant was forced to flee from the abode of his fathers, to secure his family from brutal violence; while many whose situations constrained them to remain, were deeply involved in scenes the most distressing and degrading. How many thousand situations of the deepest family distress, (did we know them) have these last few years produced! Behold a man of peace, a husband, and a father, who had long been blessed with domestic happiness and endearments; behold him forced to take arms in the angry quarrels of nations! No choice remains, he must leave the wife of his youth, and his tender and beloved

infants ; he lingers from foreboding fears, but he must pronounce farewell, and leave far behind all he holds dear on earth ; alas ! too truly did he forebode the evil to come. He sees them no more, and leaves them exposed to all the ills of unprotected poverty. The description I have now given is not the effusion of fancy, but must, on the Continent, have been too often realised.

Even in our own country, how many widows and orphans at this moment lament the untimely fate of their protectors and guardians, without any source of comfort, or spring of hope.

From these evils the return of peace has delivered Europe, and well may we give thanks. In this island, indeed, we had not heard the sound of the hostile trumpet ; but we were deeply in fear of an enemy in our land. The Lord has heard the prayers of the many righteous in these nations ; let us praise him.

3. Along with war, was felt the severe pressure of scarcity, and one judgment succeeded another. I will not enter into the question, whether or not, or how far the scarcity was occasioned by the war, or whether or how far it was real or artificial ; sufficient it is to know that the necessities of life were out of the reach of the poor.

I believe none can tell the miseries of the poor for two successive seasons, or the many rending scenes of family distress that took place. How often has the tender hearted parent been surrounded by little ones, crying for that morsel of bread he could not supply ! How many mothers denied themselves even the necessities of life to supply their infants with scanty nourishment ! and how much disease was produced by want, and unwholesome food ! Much was done to procure sup-

ply, but all that could be obtained rather alleviated misery then gave effectual relief: Oh! what praise then is due to the Most High, who has fully delivered, "giving us rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness."

4. A time of general war and hostility is most unfavourable to the spread and progress of the gospel. It has often been observed as one of the secondary causes for the spread of the gospel in the apostolic age, the profound peace with which the whole world was blessed; and in the latter days, when the truth shall eminently prevail, we are informed that "nation shall not lift up the sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." It was somewhat remarkable, that even amid the horrors of war, a new and uncommon zeal appeared in preaching the gospel to the nations: we may hope it will increase, be more general, and be attended with more fruit; now that many obstacles are removed by the prevalence of universal peace.

5. The apostles foretold that a great apostasy would take place in the profession of the Christian religion; that a power would arise under the Christian name, that should corrupt and destroy the truth, the laws, and the people of God, but which should at last be consumed and destroyed. That power is described, Dan. vii. and Rev. xvii. as arising among the ten kings who were to divide among them the Western Roman Empire; and it is plainly foretold, that its chief seat would be Rome itself, Rev. xvii. 18. It is described as a mixture of blasphemy, deceit, and violence, Dan. vii. 25. 2 Thess. ii. 4. Rev. xvii. 1. &c. But its power was to decline, and at last divine judgment was to overtake her, Dan. vii. 26. 2 Thess. ii. Rev. xvii. 16, 17. and all this is set forth as accomplished by pouring out

the vials of God's wrath.—And have they not been pouring out remarkably of late upon that antichristian power, so that now only a shadow remains of that beast that destroyed the earth, not only in France, but in Italy, and even in Rome itself? And we cannot avoid observing the just judgments of God: for in France, in a peculiar manner, antichristian cruelty and violence took place, in the dreadful persecution of the Waldenses, when a crusade, and what is called a holy war, was practised; as also in the massacre of Paris, and the cruelties exercised by Louis the 14th, on the revocation of the edict of Nantes.—Christians are called to rejoice in the downfall of that power, Rev. xviii. 20.

6. Although Christians are called peaceably to submit to every government where their lot is cast, yet must they abhor oppression, and prize rational liberty as connected with the glory of God, and the welfare of men.—Who did not feel the thrill of joy at the first deliverance of France from the iron yoke of despotism? This has been much cooled by succeeding events; but however little liberty they may at present enjoy, yet it is well for the world that the nations on the continent were not able to restore the ancient order of things, which would have been connected with the total extinction of civil and religious liberty on the continent of Europe, and might even have endangered the liberties of this nation.

Lastly, Let us be thankful that our government has stood the dangerous shock. We have still cause to bless God that we are Britons, and to be thankful that in these lands the true principles of civil and religious liberty are interwoven in the Constitution, and acknowledged and prized equally by the rulers and by the peo-

ple. In this country no man can be oppressed with impunity by the hand of power, and we enjoy the fullest liberty to worship God according to our conscience. Let us, therefore, join our thanksgivings with our prayers, that these invaluable blessings, with peace and plenty, may be continued, and that we may suitably improve the advantages we enjoy.

OF THE
NECESSITY OF CHRISTIANS

HOLDING

THE BEGINNING OF THEIR CONFIDENCE

STEDFAST TO THE END.

{Extracted from a Letter on Heb. iii. 14.}

— I AM not unacquainted with your perplexities, and I shall tell you how my mind used to work in producing them. I thought with myself, “ Since I have professed the gospel, I have acted inconsistently with it, more so, I fear, than a Christian could. If I am a Christian now, I was one then, for no change has happened in my views of the gospel; therefore I fear I am not one at all.” Thus was I ready to be led either to despair on the one hand, or to a confidence founded in my Christian character, on the other.

But this kind of reasoning goes opposite to the whole tenor of the Scriptures. Consider, as the sum of those texts to which I refer, the epistle to the Hebrews, ch. iii. and especially ver. 14. “ For we are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end.”

What the beginning of the confidence of these Hebrews was, and which they are here exhorted to hold stedfast, we see in the second chapter of the Acts. They had lately murdered the Son of God. Convinced they had done so, they were pricked in their hearts, while at the same time they received the word gladly. These effects of the down-pouring of the Holy Ghost as a Comforter; and as the Spirit of adoption, in opposition to the spirit of bondage under the law, are conformable to the account which Christ gave of the effects of the Comforter, or Spirit of adoption when he should come, John xvi. 7, 8, 9. We see these Jews, in Acts ii. convinced of sin, because of their unbelief, and pricked to the heart; while, at the same time, convinced of righteousness by the evidence of the resurrection of Christ, they received the word gladly, and rejoiced; and doubtless this was the first period of the Spirit of adoption. These persons, looking back to their former lives, saw there the blackest scene of iniquity which ever disgraced the annals of mankind; the rejecting, betraying, and murdering the everlasting Jehovah, manifest in the flesh. In themselves, therefore, they were altogether in despair, and perceived no ground of confidence in God for the remission of sins, the Holy Spirit, and eternal life, but what the righteousness manifested in the resurrection of Christ, and the love displayed in it, afforded them. On the other hand, notwithstanding all the aggravations of their sins, they saw nothing more to prevent their hope than that of the apparently most virtuous. Assured that the blood which they had shed cleansed from all sin; certain that Christ had entered into rest, had overcome every obstacle which could oppose the vilest, or prevent the weakest, and had promised salvation to every one that

believed; they could not but trust in God for the remission of sins, deliverance from their power, and entering along with Christ into his rest. To these Hebrews then, after (in consequence of receiving the word gladly) they had for many years continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers, this apostle writes, "We are made partakers of Christ, if we hold the beginning of our confidence stedfast unto the end." We have seen *what this beginning was*. Now this it is which they are exhorted to hold fast.

And we will evidently see how much occasion there is for an exhortation of this kind, if we attend a little to the danger Christians are in of turning aside from the testimony they are commanded to hear, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased."

When persons do at first believe the gospel of God, looking back to their former lives, they see nothing but one scene of making God a liar, by rejecting the testimony he has given of his Son, and consequently of loving the world in preference to God. Despairing *then* in themselves, they think not at this season of building the smallest hope upon any thing they ever did or could do; while on the other hand (and which is inseparably connected with the former) none of their sins, however great, can appear in the least degree to affect the most lively hope of a salvation—which comes unasked,—which, without inquiry, they perceive,—which supposes sin,—and which is conferred by the love of God through a divine righteousness, without the smallest respect to human worth. So that *that very thing* which shuts them up from all hope in self, occasioning the most thorough self-despair, (*i. e.* all men

being in one situation before God, God not respecting human worth, or any thing whereby one man stands distinguished from his fellow, but according to his sovereign grace, choosing some to eternal life in distinction from others); I say that very thing which shuts up from hope in self, effectually takes away all that despair of salvation which greatness of sin, or any other thing, could produce.

Thus is it with Christians hearing the word of God, and free from the doctrines and commandments of men, when they first believe the gospel: But, alas! how often may it be said, "How is the gold become dim, how is the most fine gold changed!" When men believe the gospel, *they receive the truth in the love of it*; for the natural consequence of seeing nothing between them and eternal misery, but the work of Jesus Christ, is above all things to love and prize Him, who, that he might become a refuge from every storm, "though he was in the form of God, took upon him the form of a servant, became obedient to the death of the cross, and hid not his face from shame and spitting." Again, the necessary effect of love is the *feelings of love*, and the natural consequence of both, the *pleasing the beloved object*, which, with regard to Jesus Christ, consists in keeping his commandments. The necessary consequence also, of believing the glad tidings, that Christ has become a sacrifice for sin, and that in this Jehovah is well pleased, *is the hope of a participation of all things which Christ was manifested to bestow*. The natural consequence of seeing God manifesting his justice as well as his mercy in the remission of sins, is hope in God's mercy, as nothing but the justice of God can appear to oppose this. The consequence of knowing the purpose of the manifestation of the Son of God

to deliver from sin, and the eternal design of God to save a people from all iniquity, to have fellowship with him in the contemplation and possession of his perfections, is *the earnest desire of sanctification and conformity to Christ* ; while the effect of knowing, that Jesus, in overcoming every obstacle which could oppose his entering into rest, overcame at the same time every obstacle which could prevent the chief of sinners, is *the hope of entering into the same rest*. Further, the necessary consequence of this hope, is *joy and peace*. And once more, the natural effect of the belief of his humiliation, who, on account of sins, not his own, but his people's, endured at once the hiding of the Father's countenance, the torments and temptations of devils, and the persecutions of men, must be *repentance and godly sorrow* for those sins which thus brought the Son of God to the cross. Thus then are love, obedience, hope, repentance, produced by the faith of the gospel ; and so far all is well, and in its proper place. But alas ! how often and how sadly is the whole reversed. It is true, that all these things are the inseparable evidences and effects of the truth being believed ; but the heart of man is desperately wicked and deceitful above all things, ever prone to set the truths of God at variance. Under pretence of examining by these things whether or not the truth is believed, (which is not improper, but often enjoined in Scripture), these things are put instead of that truth which produces them. The intention and nature of self-examination seems to be this : When a man has firm belief in God's mercy, and thinks that his hope is altogether founded upon the work of Jesus Christ, he is called to examine whether or not it produces those effects which hope upon the true foundation ever must produce. But it often happens that

men, instead of examining themselves, in consequence of the answer of a good conscience towards God by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and while enjoying the sense of the remission of sins through his sacrifice, examine their evidences of Christianity, *i. e.* their love, obedience, hope, joy, peace and repentance, *when their consciences are burdened with a sense of guilt*, and so plainly put these evidences instead of the blood of Jesus Christ.

Here let us pause.—Is the beginning of the confidence *thus* kept stedfast? or rather, do not all such give up the confidence and rejoicing of the hope, being moved away from the hope of the gospel? When the gospel was first believed, when they were oppressed by a sense of guilt, and destitute of every evidence of Christianity, they had then no other resource but the blood of Jesus. He was then as rivers of waters in a dry place, and the shadow of a great rock in a weary land. But now—they have other waters and other rocks besides him? now, when oppressed by a sense of guilt, they can fly away to their evidences, slighting the evidence of the good pleasure of God in the work of his beloved Son, manifested in his resurrection from the dead. Thus there is a distinction made between themselves as sinners before they believed the gospel, and themselves as Christians since they believed, in a respect wherein the Scripture warrants not the smallest, *i. e.* in the way of relief from a sense of guilt, and in the ground of their encouragement in approaching God. When sinners, they sought *no more* to relieve their guilty consciences, *no more* wherewith to approach God, than what assured them that God had accepted of, and was altogether well pleased in the work of Christ. Now, let this be as it will, they cannot be comforted, they cannot approach,

before they see that they believe this, and that it produces proper effects upon them; things, the one of which can only be known, and the other only produced, in the way of having their whole confidence founded on the blood of Jesus, and, by this being altogether and fully encouraged to draw near unto God. In fine, they are no more helpless sinners pricked in their hearts, receiving the word gladly, and so approaching God; but good Christians, proud of their evidences as distinguishing them from other men, and coming to God in consequence of presenting their Christian character instead of the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Here then we see one way in which the beginning of the confidence is not kept stedfast to the end. For surely all must allow, that there is a material and manifest difference between the *beginning* and the *end* of this confidence; a beginning and end as different as trust in God and trust in self; as different as glorying in the person and work of Christ, and glorying in our own persons and our own works.

But there is yet another way intimately connected with the former, in which the beginning of the confidence is not kept stedfast to the end. To put love, obedience, hope, joy, peace, repentance, in place of the work of Christ, is evidently to destroy them all. For instance, when we think we see, or wish to see, other things than the work of Christ between us and misery, love to him as the only refuge must be impaired in proportion; hope also must be lost; joy and peace too cannot be kept alive, or deceit alone preserves them; nor will we mourn much on account of those sins of which any thing else but the work of Christ gives us the confidence or prospect of forgiveness. Here then are the effects of the gospel gone; and thus forsaking God, the

fountain of living waters, we must hew out to ourselves broken cisterns which can hold none. The mind of man is formed for activity, and the desire of happiness is there a first and necessary principle ; and when we do not find happiness in the Creator, we must be seeking it in the creature. Forsaking the love of Christ, we must be placing our affections on opposite objects, *i. e.* upon somewhat in the world, “ the lust of the flesh, the eye, or the pride of life.” Forsaking the hope of the gospel, we must be seeking a hope in this world, producing a correspondent joy and peace, and our former godly sorrow will give place to “ the sorrow of this world which worketh death.” Thus are self-righteousness and the love of the world inseparably connected. But will the conscience of such a man be easy ? Alas ! no. The remembrance of his departed hope, love and joy will haunt him, hand in hand, with the consciousness of his present alienation ; and while he has lost hope from the gospel, and cannot take comfort *from what he is*, he will strive to open some glimpse of hope *from what he was*. Tell him, “ the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin,” he will grant it in words, when in fact he denies it. Granting that the greatest sinner, at first hearing the truth, may and ought to set his hope in God, he will doubt, if one long professing the gospel, and long in works denying it, has the same ground to do so. Here then is a denial that the blood of Jesus cleanses from all sin. *Formerly*, (*i. e.* when the truth was first believed), comfort and hope sprung from the truth in the very worst views entertained of sin : Now, unless he be free, as he thinks, from sins inconsistent with Christianity, no hope can be entertained. *Here then*, again, *the beginning of the confidence is not kept stedfast unto the end.* Formerly what-

ever godly sorrow sin might produce, no sin, however great, occasioned distrust for salvation, the gospel removing every cause of it. Formerly, no unworthiness could make us judge ourselves unworthy of eternal life, knowing that God viewed us still more unworthy than we could possibly view ourselves. Now, sin produces, not so much godly sorrow, as despair.

What is there then which can recover from such a situation? what can again restore to hope? The Lord will indeed restore the souls of his sheep; but it will not be by their getting a better opinion of themselves; nay, we may safely say, on the contrary, that it will be while they entertain a worse. *That same truth* (which levels human pride, and abases human worth, while it sets forth God as our boast, and God as our righteousness; that same truth which first quickened to lively hope in God when dead to all other, and destroyed every degree of hope in self once entertained; *that very truth alone*) can now revive the same. Let us then, when falling into unbelief, and consequently into the love of the world, and so either having hope in our own righteousness, or repining for want of it; let us, while thus asking that question, "Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?" or that in Romans x. 5. "Who shall ascend into heaven, or who shall descend into the deep?" let us, I say, remember, that "the word is nigh us, even in our mouths and in our hearts," i. e. which we profess to believe; and neither having, nor wishing to have, hope founded upon our own righteousness, but confessing ourselves the chief of sinners, let us take comfort from that word which to us as such brings salvation. The effect is sure: We shall again, through the resurrection of Jesus, have lively hope; we shall again be filled

with joy and peace in believing ; we shall above all things love Him who is free from all variableness and shadow of turning, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. This love also will constrain us powerfully, not to live unto ourselves, but unto him ; pouring contempt upon all that the world holds excellent and worthy of love. This unchangeable love and kindness, contrasted with our own ingratitude and backsliding, shall then too produce that godly sorrow which leads to repentance never to be repented of. Thus then do men live by faith ; thus do they fall by unbelief ; and thus are they again restored to live by faith ; *i. e.* by that very truth, by the faith of which they formerly stood, and by the unbelief of which they fall.——

The whole design of what has been said, is to inculcate the great necessity of glorying, first and last, entirely and exclusively, in the cross of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is freely admitted, that it is highly proper for professors of the faith to examine themselves by their fruits ; but then, of what are these fruits the evidence ? Of their faith in Christ, and hope in him alone for salvation ; and therefore no works can afford any evidences of those that perform them being the people of God, unless they are conscious that these works flow from the faith and love of the gospel, as the sole ground of their confidence. It is of the last importance for professors of the faith to be fully convinced, that when they backslide from God and his ways, they can only be recovered by that truth which first quickened them, and that the free and sovereign grace of God can alone renew their hope and joy. To this purpose we have many examples in the word of God, and particularly the case of the churches in Asia is exactly in point, recorded, Rev. chap. ii. iii. The Ephesians have

ing left their first love, are called on "to remember from whence they had fallen, and to repent." The church in Sardis having departed from their liveliness in God's ways, is exhorted "to remember how they had received and heard, and to hold fast and repent." And the Laodiceans, having fallen into a self-righteous and lukewarm state, highly offensive to Christ, are counselled by him, to buy of him gold tried in the fire, "that they might be rich; and white raiment that they might be clothed, and that the shame of their nakedness might not appear; and to anoint their eyes with eye salve, that they might see."

It is then a comfortable and safe doctrine, that Christians, in all their defections and sins, must have immediate recourse to the blood of Jesus for pardon and peace of conscience. They may perhaps have at times reason to doubt if they ever knew the truth, and this may be a state of mind salutary to their souls in certain circumstances; but they ought at all times to be convinced, that the gospel is true and suited to their case, although they themselves should have been self-deceivers, and thus to be encouraged, while it is called to-day, to draw near to God, and call on his Almighty name, who has assured us, that none shall ever do so in vain, Rom. x.

STRICTURES

ON SOME PAPERS

IN THE

EDINBURGH EVANGELICAL MAGAZINE.*

MR. EDITOR,

I WAS sorry to see in your number for November, so many things, in my opinion, opposed to the Holy Scriptures, and, indeed, contrary to the faith of Jesus, and keeping the commandments of God. I cannot refrain from making a few observations on these different essays, and I beg to be allowed to do so in one paper.

The first paper I allude to, is one on weekly commu-

* The Editors of this Magazine, unlike some of their contemporaries, were thankful for animadversions, and never refused insertion when they were written in a proper spirit.—These Strictures were published in vol. ii. pp. 569—571.

EDITOR,

nion, the tendency of which, is to endeavour to throw a mist on those passages of Scripture, which show that the first Christian churches observed the Lord's Supper every first day of the week. It is admitted, that our Lord Jesus Christ's words, by themselves, cannot determine the point, when he says, "This do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me;" but surely the practice of the churches formed by the apostles must decide it. Paul says, 1 Cor. xi. 20. "When ye come together, therefore, into one place, this is not to eat the Lord's Supper." Does not this demonstrate, that to eat the Lord's Supper was the principal reason of the disciples assembling in one place, *i. e.* on the Lord's day, for whatever partial meetings they might have through the week, it is on the Lord's day only, that we can suppose their general convocation. This view is confirmed by the simple and artless narrative of the writer of the Acts, ch. xx. 7. who says, "And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow." It is said, v. 16. that Paul remained at Troas seven days; he came, therefore, on the Monday, and remained till the first day of the week, for the sake of assembling with the disciples: and while this proves that they fully assembled every first day of the week, does it not equally establish that it was their constant practice, in these assemblies, to break bread, or eat the Lord's Supper? See 1 Cor. x. 16, &c.

The next thing I advert to is a highly exceptionable view of an important passage of Scripture, given in the department of *Sacred Criticism*; but, indeed, it is no new thing for *critics* to explain away the glorious

gospel, and subvert it. The passage I mean is Micah vi. 6, &c. of which I do not complain of the new translation, but of those paraphrases, which would turn away our attention completely from the grand and salutary truth intended to be set forth.

This critic would have us to believe, that the Lord requires a sinner instead of offering sacrifice, to do justice, love mercy, &c. ; but surely *obedience* is never in any part of God's word spoken of, as an *atonement*, even for ceremonial pollution, far less for moral guilt ; the *first* was purged by the blood of goats and calves, the *second* by the perfect sacrifice of Messiah. This view therefore of the passage seems totally subversive of the grace of God, and evidently to lead to self-righteousness.

The person introduced by Micah is fully sensible that he is a great sinner, that his *soul has sinned* against God ; he is conscious that God is displeased, and needs to be reconciled.

He is in great fear and anxiety, and extremely desirous to make some acceptable atonement. What is said in answer to all this ? " He hath showed thee, O man, what is good." This was sufficient for his relief ; no work, no offering was required, no aid or assistance promised. He was to be relieved by *what was shown him*, viz. the good news exhibited in the *gospel*, the *good-news* preached before to Abraham, which, in those very days by Micah and Isaiah were plainly revealed. With this, the former prophet concludes his prophecy, " Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham which thou hast sworn unto our fathers, from the days of old."

The prophet answers the question of, "what shall I do to be saved?" as the apostles did afterwards, and then sets forth the influence that the knowledge of this good message ought to produce. I would only here farther add, that Psal. xl. as explained Heb. x. ought to guide us in our explanation of all such passages, and that there is much need to attend to the solemn injunction of Peter against *private* glosses on the Old Testament, 2 Pet. i. 19, &c.

But I have not yet done with this same *Sacred Criticism*, for I see an attempt also made, to rob us of the blessed promise of the Messiah made to our first parents after the fall. I fairly and without scruple own, that this kind of criticism reminds me of the criticism by which Eve was emboldened to touch the forbidden fruit.

The critic supposes, that the whole meaning of the curse on the deceiver was, that the serpent "was to crawl on its belly, to grovel on the dust, to be hated by men, and to have his head bruised."

But does not the Scripture show us, that it was the devil that deceived Eve? What other interpretation can we make of these words, Rev. xii. 9. "And the great dragon was cast out, that *old Serpent*; called the-devil and satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

Whatever figure of satan's character and fate was exhibited in the serpent, yet in the words, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," we see a glorious promise of the sufferings and final victory of the Messiah, the seed of the woman; and the irreconcilable variance between him and his people, and satan and his children. For

gospel, and subvert it. The passage I mean is Micah vi. 6, &c. of which I do not complain of the new translation, but of those paraphrases, which would turn away our attention completely from the grand and salutary truth intended to be set forth.

This critic would have us to believe, that the Lord requires a sinner instead of offering sacrifice, to do justice, love mercy, &c. ; but surely *obedience* is never in any part of God's word spoken of, as an *atonement*, even for ceremonial pollution, far less for moral guilt ; the *first* was purged by the blood of goats and calves, the *second* by the perfect sacrifice of Messiah. This view therefore of the passage seems totally subversive of the grace of God, and evidently to lead to self-righteousness.

The person introduced by Micah is fully sensible that he is a great sinner, that his *soul has sinned* against God ; he is conscious that God is displeased, and needs to be reconciled.

He is in great fear and anxiety, and extremely desirous to make some acceptable atonement. What is said in answer to all this ? " He hath showed thee, O man, what is good." This was sufficient for his relief ; no work, no offering was required, no aid or assistance promised. He was to be relieved by *what was shown him*, viz. the good news exhibited in the *gospel*, the *good-news* preached before to Abraham, which, in those very days by Micah and Isaiah were plainly revealed. With this, the former prophet concludes his prophecy, " Thou wilt perform the truth to Jacob, and the mercy to Abraham which thou hast sworn unto our fathers, from the days of old."

The prophet answers the question of, "what shall I do to be saved?" as the apostles did afterwards, and then sets forth the influence that the knowledge of this good message ought to produce. I would only here farther add, that Psal. xl. as explained Heb. x. ought to guide us in our explanation of all such passages, and that there is much need to attend to the solemn injunction of Peter against *private* glosses on the Old Testament, 2 Pet. i. 19, &c.

But I have not yet done with this same *Sacred Criticism*, for I see an attempt also made, to rob us of the blessed promise of the Messiah made to our first parents after the fall. I fairly and without scruple own that this kind of criticism reminds me of the criticism by which Eve was emboldened to touch the forbidden fruit.

The critic supposes, that the whole meaning of the curse on the deceiver was, that the serpent "was to crawl on its belly, to grovel on the dust, to be hated by men, and to have his head bruised."

But does not the Scripture show us, that it was the devil that deceived Eve? What other interpretation can we make of these words, Rev. xii. 9. "And the great dragon was cast out, that *old Serpent*, called the-devil and satan, which deceiveth the whole world."

Whatever figure of satan's character and fate was exhibited in the serpent, yet in the words, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel," we see a glorious promise of the sufferings and final victory of the Messiah, the seed of the woman; and the irreconcilable variance between him and his people, and satan and his children. For

the first, consult Heb. ii. 14, 15. for the second, Rev. xii. 17.

In the last place, there are two papers on the discipline of Christian churches, with which I shall conclude my remarks.

1. We ought in one respect to distinguish between persons possessing wicked characters, and those who, otherwise walking as Christians, have committed an offence, or been overtaken in a fault. As to the *first*, when discovered, we have no warrant to forbear them one moment, or ask even a profession of repentance; the duty of a Christian church is instant exclusion, as in the case of the incestuous person at Corinth, "To deliver such an one unto satan for the destruction of the flesh that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." And nothing but a changed conduct can warrant such a person being restored. The apostle in the end of the same chapter gives a catalogue of such characters.

2. When a brother commits a fault, he is to be dealt with according to the rules laid down by Christ in Matt. xviii. and in other places of the New Testament—and his exclusion turns not only on his original fault, but his impenitence and pride, in resisting all attempts to gain him.

3. When a person leaves a church of Christ, and forsakes the ordinances of the gospel, though he cannot be excommunicated or cut off, yet he must be looked on as giving up the profession of the name of Christ; for whatever may be his original fault, or the specious pretences assumed, does not he forsake the assembling himself with the saints, condemn the ordinances of Christ, turn his back upon the brethren, and renounce

the exercise of pure and undefiled religion? What can be said in such circumstances, alas, but the words of John, "They went out from us, but they were not of us, for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us." These words are spoken as to *present appearance*; but they do not mean that no such person shall repent and be restored.

4. The word of God makes no difference as to our after conduct, between such persons as are separated from the communion as wicked characters, and those who are cut off for the least offence persisted in and justified; as to the last, it is said, Matt. xviii. 17. "Let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican." And as to the wicked characters summarily excluded, Christians are called on not to keep company, no not to eat. Christians, therefore, are to decline familiar intercourse, and friendly meals with such, that they may be ashamed, and to prevent infection of the body. The injunctions, and the reasons of them, do not apply to such intercourse, as necessity, humanity, and accidental circumstances occasion.

Lastly, I do not understand that any member of a Christian church can be excluded from its fellowship, because he is obnoxious to a number of his brethren, or because he is not esteemed by some that are without, who may be seemingly well affected to the profession, unless there are plain proofs of his not being under the influence of the truth. This would be to introduce a kind of ostracism into the churches, and sanctify the most baneful passions of the human mind. The apostle Paul himself was highly obnoxious to some of the churches, and I can easily conceive, that in certain circumstances, a person zealous for the ancient truth, con-

tending for the kingdom and commandments of Jesus Christ, opposing all the ways by which the glorious gospel is perverted, and despising the traditions of men, under whatever pretended appearances of sanctity, might come to be very little esteemed, to be suspected as disaffected to piety, and fall a sacrifice to this kind of discipline, which is to be founded on being obnoxious to his brethren, and standing in the way of some who were anxious to join the church.

EDINBURGH, Nov. 24. 1804.

A
WORD
TO THE
WISE & UNWISE.

READER, whoever thou art, young or old, mean or honourable, consider the few following sentences with attention ; you will not be long detained, and cannot be more profitably employed. You are a mortal : in a few short days or years your body will lie with the clods of the valley, and your soul will be in a state of happiness or misery never to be reversed. You are a sinner : and if not believing in Jesus Christ, and thus born again by his word, you are a child of wrath, and to you in this situation the hour of death must be the entrance to everlasting torment. Is any thing of equal importance with attention to this ? What are all the big vain pursuits in which you are engaged, compared to this momentous concern ? You are a breaker of the law of the MOST HIGH, which requires perfect obedience, that law which curses the transgressor to death eternal, Gal. iii. 10, &c. Know you not that you have disobeyed it ? Let conscience speak, that faithful though unacceptable monitor. But perhaps you are like an old Pharisee, thinking to live by your own works, and boasting that you are not as other men. Alas ! what are you about ? rejecting the righteousness of Christ, despising the

grace of the gospel, and making the Living GOD a liar, by disbelieving his faithful word. Are these the works on which you found your hope?

In this accepted time, and day of salvation, hear the glad tidings of grace and mercy. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;" John iii. 16. The Almighty Son of God came to redeem those that were ready to perish; for such he shed his precious blood; and when he rose from the grave, leading captivity captive, the Father gave assured proof that he was well pleased in what he had done; Heb. x. 5, 6, 7. 11, 12. Behold the good news are proclaimed to all men, of every character, of every kind! and this is the declaration of the God of truth, "He that believeth shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned," Mark xvi. 15, 16. Whosoever thou art, give ear unto this: Hear for the time to come, while the day of salvation continues, and whilst thou art yet in the land of hope. Soon shalt thou stand before the judgment seat of Christ; and in that solemn day, it shall tremendously appear that no man can neglect or despise this gospel and prosper. Alas! dreadful then will be the ruin of those who have rejected the counsel of the MOST HIGH.—O Reader, may the Lord in his mercy prevent this from being the case with thee!

THE
COMMISSION OF CHRIST
TO HIS APOSTLES
ILLUSTRATED*.

MATTHEW xxviii. 18, 19, 20.

And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

WHEN Jesus Christ appeared upon earth, remarkably was that prophecy of Isaiah fulfilled ch. lxiii. but when he rose from the dead leading captivity captive, he then appeared as a mighty conqueror, evidently possessed of divine and almighty power. He here declares to his apostles the extent of this, saying, "All power," &c. This corresponds with Philip. ch. ii., where it is said, that in consequence of his humbling himself, and becoming obedient to the death of the cross, "God hath

* The notes which Mr INGLIS occasionally used in preaching, were generally written in such a contracted manner, as to be understood only by himself. This, and the two following, were the only discourses found among his papers at all fit for publication, and the reader must make due allowance for the deficiencies he may discover in them. This Sermon on Matt. xxviii. there is reason to suppose, was the first Mr INGLIS preached. EDIT.

highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." He says here, "*All power is given to me in heaven;*" so we see him seated at his Father's right hand as the king of Zion, a priest upon his throne, angels and all the heavenly host being made subject to and worshipping him. "All power is given to him" also "*on earth,*" and this supreme authority he exercises both in the world at large, and in his kingdom in the world. He exercises this by his providence in making all things to work together for good to them that love him: in restraining the power of the enemies of his gospel—in so ordering events as to forward the success of the gospel among the nations, and in making all things ready for his second coming to judge the world. In his kingdom he rules absolutely by his word and Spirit over his willing subjects, having turned them by his almighty power from darkness to light. He is the alone Lawgiver, the Sovereign and the Judge; he alone has a right to make laws and to enforce them upon his people, and in this his kingdom, he reigns without a delegate or substitute, for he himself walks in the midst of the churches; no man then, or set of men, have any power committed unto them from him, either to make new laws, to disannul old ones, or even infallibly to explain the laws already made. Upon this supreme authority of Christ we see the following commission is grounded, for he gives it as the reason of it, saying, "*Go ye therefore,*" &c. or for this reason: and most admirably calculated was this reason to encourage their hearts in the exercise of it; for if Christ was possessed of all power in

his kingdom, then he had a good and undoubted right to dictate his own laws, how his apostles were to proceed in declaring the truth, and what things were to follow the reception of it in the world; and if Christ was possessed of all power in the world, then they knew that he would accompany them, prepare all things for their success, and restrain the fury of their adversaries: and though to all outward appearance they were altogether despicable and unable to contend with their foes, yet they will be enabled always to triumph in Christ; he says himself, "Lo, I am with you always," &c. In speaking about this commission we shall just follow the order of the verses, which divide themselves into three heads:

I. *Go ye, therefore, teach all nations.*

II. *Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*

III. *Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*

I. We are to speak about what it was the apostles taught the nations; and 1st, I would observe, that the word *teach* here used, does not in the original signify merely to declare a thing, but to do it with effect, or to disciple or make disciples by teaching among all nations. As to what it was that they declared for this end, we see it in the parallel place in Mark xvi. *Go ye therefore into all the world, &c.* We see then that it was the gospel they were to preach to every creature, and it was by this they were to make disciples among all nations.

The gospel is one of those Greek words which never have received a translation; for gospel conveys no idea to an English reader; and so people just have any idea from it that their teachers please to give them. The word signifies glad tidings, or good news; and so it

sometimes is rendered in the Scriptures; see Luke ii. 10. Acts xiii. 22. But before we proceed to declare of what the good news consist, it may be proper briefly to set forth the situation of the world, the “every creature” to whom they are preached. Good news of salvation must in the nature of things be relative to sin and misery; in consequence of the first transgression, every creature was under condemnation, born into the world the children of wrath with their minds at enmity against God, and manifesting this hatred by wicked works, insensible of their danger, in love with their sin, and perfectly as unable as unwilling to move one step nearer to God, and in so far as they were religiously disposed, seeking to please God with doings of their own, endeavouring to please God with their own works. Every creature had broken that law which says, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them*, Gal. iii. 10. and that law promised life to none other than he who did the things contained in it, shall live by it, and the things it required are love to God, *with all the heart, mind, and strength, &c.* Luke x. 25. Thus every man was under the curse, unable to make atonement for his sins, and as unable to perform that acceptable obedience that the law required. Here at first view the idea of the need of sacrifice comes in, and so firmly persuaded were all nations of this, that from the natural notices of their consciences with one consent they instituted sacrifices to propitiate the Deity; and by the bye, this made the gospel more intelligible to them at first hearing. To every creature thus circumstanced is the gospel or good news to be preached, which leads to what we were about to consider, viz. *what the gospel is*, and if we take in the

connection in Mark xvi. 14, 15. we will see it was the resurrection of Jesus Christ, which is also termed the gospel, Acts xiii. 32, &c. 2 Tim. ii. 8. This is also evident from its being made the foundation of the guilty's hope, 1 Pet. i. and the sum of the apostle's preaching, Acts iv. 33. Now the resurrection of Christ cannot be said to be the good news considered in itself, but only when taken in its import; the good news, properly speaking, is the testimony concerning the person, work and resurrection of Christ, and acceptance of his sacrifice. One of these is often taken for the whole, and most frequently his resurrection, as this was the crowning point, and what ascertained the dignity of his person, the excellency of his work, and God's good pleasure in and acceptance of it in full of all demands of law and justice. Let us then briefly consider those different parts of the gospel as proved beyond controversy by the resurrection of Christ from the dead: and,

1st, The dignity of his person. Nothing is more clear from the sacred Scriptures, than that Jesus Christ is the true God, the Most High Jehovah. Let us compare a few of the Old Testament Scriptures with their accomplishment in the New, which plainly show this. Isa. vii. 14. with Mat. i. 23. Isa. ix. 6. with Luke i. 31. Isa. xxxv. 5. with Luke vii. 22. Isaiah xl. 3. with Matt. iii. 3. This same doctrine is also fully declared in the apostles' writings, Acts xx. 28. Rom. ix. 5. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. i. 8. Rev. i. 8.—17. &c.

But the Scriptures also declare that he was manifest in the flesh, has a human body and soul, and in this sense the Son of God, Luke i. 35. John i. where the whole of this mystery is declared.

Now no less a person than Jesus Christ could have suited the guilty; one who was possessed of infinite

merit to make a suitable atonement for their infinite transgressions. Now the infinite dignity of Christ's person was fully demonstrated by his resurrection from the dead. A controversy was held during his life between him and the Jews, which he himself was willing to rest upon this event, and so God himself finally decided the point as Rom. i. which leads to the

2d Article of the gospel, viz. the *work* of Jesus Christ as the atoning sacrifice. Now the end of his appearing is expressly said to have been to give his life a ransom, &c. Heb. ii. 17. We have seen the situation of those he came to save, under the curse of a broken law and unable to obey it. Christ interposed, took the curse upon himself, and himself performed the acceptable obedience to his Father's law, in the name and stead of all his guilty people; this he did when he once for all offered himself up unto God a sacrifice of a sweet smelling savour, Gal. iii. 13. it was also when he gave his life that he performed the highest act of obedience, and most gloriously fulfilled that law, in perfect love to God, and perfect love to his neighbour; in this work, the justice of God and conscience of a sinner meet in one common ground of satisfaction, for in this work, the whole of the divine perfections are magnified in the highest degree; not only mercy, grace and love, but justice and holiness, Psal. lxxxix. Jer. ix. Luke ii. 14. Rom. iii. Now it is the resurrection of Jesus Christ which fully manifests this work to be completely finished, and to have answered every demand of law and justice. Had Christ remained in the grave, this could not have appeared; but in his resurrection we see him discharged as the public head and representative of his people, and so we may be certain that the work he did is finished, that he has paid the debt.

3d, God is *well pleased* in this finished work. The pinching question in a sinner's conscience, is that asked in Micah vi. "Wherewith shall I approach," &c. and nothing but what is accompanied with a declaration of the divine good pleasure can give the guilty conscience ease; the sacrifice of Christ then, unaccompanied with this, would be ineffectual fully to satisfy the guilty mind, as it could never be certain but something besides might be required of themselves; but when God has declared his perfect good pleasure and satisfaction in this work, then our minds in the faith of this will rest in assured confidence. This good pleasure of God in Christ had been declared in prophecy, Isa. xlii. To us was it also testified from the excellent glory; but the crowning evidence of this was his resurrection from the dead and ascension to God's right hand, there being possessed of all power.—The last thing I would mention on this head is the way in which sinners are interested in this truth, for were not this declared, men would be at as great an uncertainty as to their own salvation as if the gospel had never been declared at all, but this declaration always accompanies the gospel, *He that believeth, &c.* Romans iv. The faith by which the ungodly are justified, is directly and diametrically opposed to working of every species, and under every pretext, *It is of faith, that it might be by grace, and to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed.* It is very necessary that we attend to this subject, as upon none a greater mist has been thrown by our most noted preachers, and by converting faith into a perplexed and mysterious work, sinners have been kept back from the benefit, and believers from the comfort of the free and open truth.

I shall now proceed to the second general head, *baptizing, &c.* but upon this I mean to be very short, as well

as well as upon what follows, as I have consumed so much time upon the first ; and upon this subject we shall, *1st*, consider what baptism is ; *2d*, the subjects of it ; and *3dly*, its import and meaning. As to the first, what baptism is, the commission itself plainly declares. Baptism is a Greek word, which is not rendered into English in our translation, its literal meaning is to dip, immerse or plunge : had it been translated, it would have run, immersing them ; the translators have rendered this word immerse, dip and plunge in other cases when baptism was not mentioned, 2 Kings v. 14. *i. e.* baptized himself. As this has never been disputed, this ought to end the point ; but the matter does not rest here, for in the *2d* place, the places John chose for baptizing, show it was immersion ; he baptized in Jordan a great river, John iii. 23. *3dly*, The circumstances of our Lord's, and the baptism of the Eunuch, show that it was immersion, Mark iii. 15. Acts viii. 36. *4th*, The allusions made to baptism in the Scriptures plainly show that it was immersion, Rom. vi. 3. Col. ii. 12.

Having thus shown what baptism is, let us, *2d*, point out the *subjects* of it, and those are adults and not infants, believers and not unbelievers, or in other words, men professing with their mouths to believe with their hearts the gospel of Jesus Christ ; and the commission itself plainly points out this. The *them* that are to be baptized applies not to the nations, but to the taught among the nations ; this is not so clear from the English as the Greek version, which reads, " Go, make disciples among all nations, baptizing them," *i. e.* the disciples. But the practice of the apostles, or how they executed it, as we know they were faithful, will throw the best light upon this subject, Acts ii. 41. viii. 12, 13. 37. x. 44. xv. 8, 9. xvi. 14, 15. 30, 31. &c. xviii. 8. The

practice of the apostles, thus confirming the commission, ought to silence every doubt.

As to the *import* of baptism ; it signifies in general our connection with Christ in his death and resurrection, Col. ii. 12. in which respect it is an apt sign of the remission of sins, Acts xxii. 16. 1 Pet. iii. 21. ; of sanctification, Rom. vi. 4. Tit. iii. 5. and eternal life, Rom. vi. 5. ; of our being henceforth the Lord's and bound to his service, Gal. ii. 20.

Now the third general head, which I shall just mention, was *teaching the baptized disciples* all things, &c. Acts ii. Here we see them continuing in the public ordinances of divine worship, and abounding in good works. In general, the apostles inculcated the genuine effects of the grace of God, as mentioned Tit. ii. 11.

SALVATION OF INFANTS*.

MARK X. 13—17.

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God, &c.

THIS subject is highly important, and especially seasonable at a time when some are weeping over their departed children. What so powerful to dry maternal tears as that precious truth, delivered to the mothers of Jerusalem, Jer. xxxi. 15—17. “Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord; and they shall come again from the land of the enemy: And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border.” And what can effectually dry our tears for those we tenderly love but this hope about them? see 1 Thess. iv. 13. where the apostle says, “But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them who are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others who have no hope. For if we believe

* This discourse was delivered April 26. 1789.

that Jesus died, and rose again, even so them also who sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."

I have chosen the passage read, not because I mean to illustrate it alone, but as a suitable text to a discourse about the salvation of infants, in which I mean to take a view of all the passages in the Old and New Testaments which clearly appear to regard this subject.

For the sake of distinctness, I shall divide this illustration of sacred Scripture into two different heads.

I. To show, that the word of God fully establishes that little children are the subjects of salvation.

II. To consider what light it affords us about the extent of that salvation.

I. To show that the word of God fully establishes that little children are the subjects of salvation, let us consider the following Scriptures.

1st, Jer. xxxi. 15, &c. "Thus saith the Lord, A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation and bitter weeping: Rachel weeping for her children, refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not. Thus saith the Lord, Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears; for thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord, and they shall come again from the land of the enemy: And there is hope in thine end, saith the Lord, that thy children shall come again to their own border." See Matt. ii. 16—19. which literally respects little children. "Then Herod, when he saw that he was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth, and sent forth and slew all the children that were in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under, according to the time that he had diligently enquired of the wise men. Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the prophet, saying, In

Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted, because they are not." This passage is only brought in to show the fulfilment of it; it is not illustrated. The mothers of Jerusalem are here comforted, and how? "Thy work shall be rewarded."—There is a peculiar beauty and grace in considering these first innocent, though involuntary martyrs of Jesus as rewarded for their sufferings. "And they shall come again from the land of the enemy:" what land had they gone to? they were not—death and the grave is the land of the enemy, see 1 Cor. xv. 26. 50, &c. They were to come from it so as to dry the tears of sorrow, "and there is hope." When could they come again? not till the resurrection. How were they to come to their own border? surely the inheritance allotted them, as Dan. xii. 13. "But go thou thy way till the end be: for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.

2d, Isa. lxx. 20. "There shall be no more thence an infant of days, nor an old man that hath not filled his days; for the child shall die an hundred years old; but the sinner, being an hundred years old, shall be accursed." This chapter respects the gospel age, as appears from ver. 1, 2. 9. 12. 24, 25. And as to what is said of infants, ver. 20. it may be explained by our Lord's words, Mark x. 14—17. The righteousness of Christ, which alone entitles any to the kingdom of heaven, is as effectual for infants as for believing adults, and his Spirit is equally powerful to fit them for the enjoyment of eternal life.

3d, Psal. viii. 2. "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, because of thine enemies; that thou mightest still the enemy and the

avenger." This Psalm applies to Christ and his dominion, see Heb. ii. 6. "But one in a certain place testified, saying, What is man that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man that thou visitest him? Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownedst him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands. Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet." This dominion is not only of power over his enemies, but chiefly of grace in the midst of them, Psal. cx. 2, 3. "The Lord shall send the rod of thy strength out of Zion, rule thou in the midst of thine enemies. Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power, in the beauties of holiness from the womb of the morning: thou hast the dew of thy youth." As, when he was a little while lower than the angels in his humiliation, he passed through the stages of human life, and was a suckling and a babe,—so in his exaltation he rules in his kingdom of grace, over subjects made to him of all ages. This Psalm was fulfilled in his triumphant entry into Jerusalem, Matt. xxi. 15, 16. "And when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David; they were sore displeased, and said unto him, Hearest thou what these say? And Jesus saith unto them, Yea; have ye never read, Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise?" This was a prelude of his triumphant and joyful exaltation.—Then was shown the nature of his kingdom—the character of his subjects—the rude and unlearned part of the people praised, while the rulers, the priests and wise men kept their distance. I have thought that while the chief priests and the scribes in the temple kept an indignant silence, that the mouths of the babes

were miraculously opened to sound his praise. Thus they typified the characters of his disciples and the divine power exerted upon them.—Also illustrated the doctrine in the Psalm, that little children should be the subjects of the Messiah. This Psalm thus applied, not only shows that babes or young children even in this world may sing praise to this king, but that sucklings, the youngest infants may do so, and that not imperfectly, as all praise must be here, but perfect praise which only can be given in the heavenly state.

4th, Rom. v. 12. &c. “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned. For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless, death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one, many be dead: much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many,” &c. In this passage the apostle shows the great advantages that grace reigning through righteousness unto eternal life, has over sin pursuing man to death. I would just observe that if no infants, dead through the one offence, were made alive through the one righteousness, in that respect sin and death would have the advantage.

5th, Mark x. 13—17. “And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them; and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and

forbid them not ; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them." This is the passage, which as it were collects together the united light of the word of God on this subject. Compare also Matt. xix. 13. and Luke xviii. 15. where it appears these children were young infants, that they were not brought for cures, but for spiritual blessings, probably by their parents, but surely by believers.—Christ's disciples rebuked those who brought them, ver. 13. " But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not ; for of such is the kingdom of God," ver. 14. He shows the cause, ver. 15. " Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." His words, ver. 14. are a conclusive and important reason. The kingdom here meant is not his visible kingdom on earth, but the everlasting heavenly kingdom, as is plain from his conduct in taking them up in his arms and blessing them, ver. 16. and his caution ver. 15. " Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein." Whosoever thinks to inherit eternal life by any other righteousness or qualification than what is freely conferred on a little child, shall be excluded.

II. Consider what light the word of God affords about the *extent* of this salvation.

Two Preliminary Remarks.

1. Though all children dying in infancy partake of salvation, this does not at all interfere with the doctrine of particular election, for then we would just say that

many of the Lord's elect were ordained to die in infancy.

2. It does not interfere with the doctrine of the corruption of human nature. Though young children have not committed actual transgression, yet they inherit sinful pollution of nature from Adam, as well as mortality, and this pollution shows itself in their tempers as well as this mortality by disease. This corruption of nature is often manifested before they themselves are properly conscious of transgressing any law. They are saved then from sin and death by the second Adam, washed in his blood, and entitled to the justification of life ; and thus qualified to join in the song of all the redeemed, Rev. v. 9.

As to the *extent* of this salvation, observe,

1. The word of God sets forth the death by Adam's sin to be going to the dust. It never states Adam's sin as the cause of eternal death to his posterity without the intervention of their own sin, or actual sins to be the cause of going to the grave, Rom. v. 12. &c. Punishment in another world is always set forth as the reward of sin committed in this, Rom. ii. 5. &c. This implies transgression of the law, and knowledge of good and evil, Jonah iv. 11.

2. Consider in connection with this the procedure at the judgment, Rev. xx. 11, 12. " And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away, and there was no place found for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God : and the books were opened ; and another book was opened, which is the book of life : and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works," &c. Here all the dead are included in the expression *small*

and great—high and low, rich and poor, young and old. Here we see election and judgment according to works, even as in Matt. xxv. “The books are opened”—Some are judged by the book of the law of nature, written on the heart—others by the book of the written law—and by the gospel the rejecters and disobeyers of it. How can little infants be judged out of the things written in these books according to their works? If not, where can we find them but by God’s free favour in that other book, even the book of life? From these considerations it would seem that the word of God would lead us to judge favourably as to the state of all infants dying in infancy, while as to the first point it clearly ascertains that such enter into glory, and warrants our supplications to Jesus Christ to bless them.

THE
DEATH AND RESURRECTION
OF
CHRIST,
A GROUND OF COMFORT TO BELIEVERS.

THE SUBSTANCE OF FIVE SERMONS

ON

REVELATION i. 4—19.

THIS passage presents us with a vision of Jesus Christ appearing to John in all that glory with which he is now invested as the king of Zion, and as a priest upon his throne. John was struck with a pannick fear at his appearance, and fell at his feet as dead : but Christ reminds him of who he was, that he had no true cause of fear from him, for he was the same who was dead for the sake of his people ; nor from any other quarter, because he was “ The first and the last, who was alive forever, and had the keys of hell and of death.” Let us consider in their order the grounds of comfort here presented to John ; *first*, who Christ is.

“ *The First and the Last and the living One.*”

The beauty and force of this passage is a good deal spoiled in the translation ; the words are literally these, “ I am the First and the Last and the living One, and I became dead, and behold I am alive unto ages of ages,

or forever and ever, Amen ; and have the keys of the grave and of death."

Thus Christ speaks of himself as " the living One," previous to his death, for he was originally the Prince of Life ; in him essentially was life, &c.

We intend at present to prove from the Scriptures that every *name*, *property* and *work*, by which the *true God* stands distinguished from his *creatures*, is applied to *Jesus Christ*, and also that *worship* which is due to *God alone*.

I. The peculiar names of the author of all things are applied unto him.

1. He is called God often, both in the Old Testament and the New. In the Old Testament, see Isa. xxxv. 4, 5, 6. compared with Luke vii. 19—24. ; Isa. xl. 3. 9, 10. compared with Matt. iii. 3. also v. 11. with John x. 11. In the New Testament, see John xx. 28. Acts xx. 28. 1 Tim. iii. 16. Heb. i. 8. 1 John iii. 16. And to fix down the sense in which he is called God, epithets are conjoined with that name, to show that he is so called in the most true and proper sense, and in no typical or subordinate manner. Isa. ix. 6. he is called " The mighty God." Compare ver. 1, 2. with Matt. iv. 13—17. " God over all," Rom. ix. 5. " The great God," Tit. ii. 13. He is declared in every respect to be equal with the Father, Philip. ii. 5, 6. and he declares himself, that he is the only true God besides whom there is none, Isa. xlv. 21, 22. compare ver. 23. with Rom. xiv. 10, 11.

2. He is called JEHOVAH, Isa. xl. 3. Isa. vi. 1—6. compare ver. 8, 9, 10. with John xii. 39, 40, 41. Isa. viii. 13, 14. compared with Rom. ix. 33. and he appears to take this name to himself, John viii. 58.

II. The perfections and properties peculiar to God are applied unto him.

1. *He is eternal and self-existent*, Rev. i. 8. 17, 18. John i. 4.

2. *Almighty*, Rev. i. 8. Psal. xlv. 3. compare ver. 6, 7. with Heb. i. 8, 9.

3. *Infinitely wise*, Jude ver. 24, 25. 1 Tim. i. 17. Col. ii. 3.

4. *Omniscient*, John xxi. 17. Rev. ii. 23. How else could he judge the world?

5. *Every where present*, Matt. xviii. 20. xxviii. 20. John iii. 13.

6. Is the Father infinitely holy, and thus addressed "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty?" so is Jesus Christ, and thus also is he addressed, Isa. vi. 3.; he is called "*The most holy*," Dan. ix. 24. which marks its own explication, ver. 25. He is termed "*The Holy One*," Acts iii. 14.

7. Essential justice belongs unto him, Isa. xlv. 21. He is thus termed in distinction from all creatures, "*The Just One*," Acts iii. 14. vii. 52. xxii. 14.

8. There is none good but *one*, i. e. God, but Jesus Christ is set forth as essentially and infinitely gracious, John i. 14. 1 Tim. i. 1, 2. Here, and in many other passages, his grace and mercy are set forth as equal to the grace and mercy of God the Father.

III. The *works* peculiar to God are ascribed unto him.

1. To him are ascribed the works of *creation*, Heb. i. 10. and these mark out the true God, Rom. i. 19, 20.

2. He *upholds* all things, Coloss. i. 17. Heb. i. 3.

3. Though men have frequently been the instruments of working miracles, yet they received this power from God, for still he is the fountain of all power of this

kind, Psal. cxlvi. 8. Opening the eyes of the blind is set forth as a work peculiar to God ; but Christ declares that men should do these wonderful works in *his* name, Mark xvi. 17, 18. Acts iii. 12. 16.

4. It is the province of God to open up the understanding to know what flesh and blood cannot reveal, but it is declared that Christ did so, Luke xxiv. 45. John v. 25.

5. The last resurrection is ascribed to the power of Jesus, which is as peculiar to God as creation, John v. 28, 29.

IV. *Divine worship* is ascribed unto him ; this he himself declares to be his due, John v. 23. and this he received,

1. When on earth, John ix. 38. and when hanging on the cross, Luke xxiii. 42.

2. After he ascended, both from saints on earth, Luke xxiv. 52. Acts vii. 59. and indeed believers are thus described, Acts ix. 14. and from angels and saints in heaven, Rev. v. 8—14. See also Psal. xcvi. 7. compared with Heb. i. 6.

From what has been said, it will be evident to all what view we entertain about the person of Christ ; that we believe him to be “ ‘The only living and true God, beside whom there is no God, in conjunction with the Father and he Holy Spirit. We do not believe that his godhead lies in his being begotten of the Father, before all worlds, by eternal generation ; nor do we describe him as human confessions have done, as God of God, light of light, &c. for we are convinced that such views and expressions are inconsistent with his true godhead, and make him after all inferior to the Father. We believe him to be the Son of God as manifest in human flesh. When the Word who was God, who made all things, and in whom originally was life, was made

flesh, and dwelt among us, then, and not till then, we beheld him as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

2. If then *the First and the Last*, the *living One*, became dead as an atonement for sins; how perfect must this sacrifice be; surely it is sufficient to purge the foulest guilt, and fully answer every end for which it was appointed. Our confidence then can never come up to that ground which the blood of God has laid for it.

3. This mystery of godliness is the rock on which the church is built; let us hold it fast, as what is most surely believed by us, and avoid all such janglings upon this subject as would either tend to weaken our own minds, or lessen our abhorrence of the views of such as oppose or undermine it.

A *second* ground of comfort, intimately connected with the first, is,

And I became dead, upon which we shall observe,

1. "The First and the Last," &c. *becoming dead* necessarily implies his taking part in human nature; compare Psal. xl. 6, 7. with Heb. x. 5. he took it into personal union with himself, that so the same HE who made the worlds might suffer, Heb. i. 2, 3. that the First and the Last might die. Thus every thing done and suffered in his human nature, was done and suffered by God himself manifest in the flesh; thus God purchased the church with his own blood. It is as Emmanuel that he is set forth as the Son of God, Luke i. 31—36. compared with Isa. vii. 14. ix. 6, 7. Matt. i. 23. See also John i. 14.

2. For *whose sakes* took he part in flesh and blood, and die? John xvii. 19, 20. compared with ver. 6., &c. Heb. ii. 13. last clause, 14, 15, 16, 17. first clause.

Here they are set forth as “the *children* which God gave him, his *brethren*, the seed of *Abraham*.” Here Christ taking hold of a body of the seed of Abraham according to the flesh, is set forth as representing that spiritual distinction among men, which sovereign grace has made in Jesus Christ only taking part in human nature *with his brethren*, the spiritual seed of Abraham, according to the election of grace.

3. What was the *cause* of the death of Emmanuel? He is every where said to have died for others. The *nature* of his death we shall by and by consider: but this shows that the *cause* of his death was the sins of men. All men, and therefore the elect, in consequence of Adam’s apostasy, are not only mortal, but born into the world in his fallen image—prone to do evil, and subject themselves to the pains of the second death—all actually transgressors of God’s law, and under its curse; compare Rom. iii. 9—21. with ch. ii. 8, 9.: both the justice and faithfulness of God, are engaged to punish transgression; further, see Eph. ii. 1—4. where men are described as dead to true life, which lies in God’s favour; though alive in the service of sin and satan—influenced in their conduct by the agency of satan, to whom they are willing slaves—in all their ways polluted—in love with wretchedness, and liable to the wrath and curse of God. If such lost and ruined creatures were to be saved, forgiven, delivered from the wretched slavery of sin, and from going down to the pit, *justice* and *truth* required a substitute, a ransom infinitely precious to atone, and offered by the nature that sinned, to have a peculiar reference to sins committed by men, and to manifest the truth, and righteous government of Jehovah.

4. The *nature* of the death of Jesus Christ; his

death was *substitutional*: this the prophets held forth, Isa. liii. 5, 6. 8. Dan. ix. 26. and innumerable places in the New Testament, e. g. 2 Cor. v. 14. 1 Pet. iii. 18. It was a *sacrifice* or *atonement*, and thus the truth of all the ancient sacrifices, 1 Cor. v. 21. Heb. ii. 17. x. 5—11. It was an *accursed death*; he died under the divine malediction due to the guilty, Gal. iii. 13.; thus his wonderful cry on the cross—thus the justice and faithfulness of God were manifested to the highest advantage, in the richest display of sovereign grace to the utterly vile.

5. The *end* of the death of Jesus Christ: This in general was to *save* sinners. Let us briefly enquire into some of the particulars included here; it bears a reference to the miserable situation of men, see Acts xxvi. 17, 18.

1. To enlighten men's understandings, *viz.* in their own characters, and that of God, and to their true interest.

2. To deliver from the bondage of the devil, who is the ruler of the darkness of this world, and rules by means of it.

3. To take away the obligation to punishment, and confer the remission of sins.

4. Not only to save from hell-fire, but to confer an inheritance among the sanctified, to begin that deliverance *now*, which is to be completed at the *resurrection* of the just.

6. The *way* in which sinners are *interested* in the benefits of Christ's death: "He that believeth" this *simply*, just crediting the gospel to be true, 1 John v. 9. thus, he who believes sets to his seal to God's truth, John iii. 32, 33., while he who disbelieves, makes God a liar, 1 John v. 10. This is opposed to *all works*, Rom.

iv. 4, 5. while it corresponds with grace, ver. 16. Eph. ii. 8, 9.

A *third* ground of comfort is, *Christ's life from the grave, and his consequent glory, power and dominion*, contained in these words, "And behold I am alive unto ages of ages, Amen; and have the keys of the grave and of death," which may be comprised under the following general heads.

I. The truth of Christ's resurrection, and the evidence thereof.

II. The meaning and import of that fact.

III. The ends of Christ's resurrection.

I. The truth of Christ's resurrection, and the evidence thereof. Here we would only in a word premise, that this is an important subject; from the truth of it the whole of his religion derives its certainty, as from the import of that fact, and the ends of that event, it derives its glory. The resurrection of Christ is emphatically termed the gospel, Acts xiii. 32, 33.; with the belief of it salvation is connected, Rom. x. 9. and thus it was the sum and substance of the apostolic testimony, Acts iv. 33.: let us therefore attentively consider its evidence.

1. We observe that many saw him alive, after he was dead; I say, *after* he was dead, for the fullest evidence is produced, that he was really dead, John xix. 33—38. and indeed we may well believe, that the priests and rulers who surrounded his cross, would fully satisfy themselves that he was really dead, and in order to give further demonstration of the same thing, he was buried, and lay in the grave part of three days.—Many then saw him alive, after he was dead; we may take Paul's summary to the Corinthians, "And that he was

buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures : and that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve. After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once ; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James ; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time. For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God." 1 Cor. xv. 4—9. There is no account there of his appearance to the women, to whom he appeared first, nor to the two disciples going to Emmaus, perhaps, because both were only preludes to his appearance *to the apostles* ; and because neither the women, nor these two disciples, were properly witnesses to the world of the fact, but rather messengers of the tidings to the apostles. " And that he was seen of Cephas," recorded Luke xxiv. 34. " then of the twelve," so called, not because there was at that time actually twelve apostles, for there was a vacancy of one by the sin of Judas, (and thus they are called by the Evangelist, the *eleven*,) but because twelve was their full number, they are properly so denominated. I think it evident that Paul here includes two appearances of Jesus to his apostles, and classes them together, as there was only a short interval of time between them, and no appearance to any other in that interval ; for Paul here places his appearance to the five hundred, which must have been in the mountain in Galilee, as immediately after his appearing to the twelve ; and John records two public appearances to his apostles, before he went to Galilee, which he expressly makes his third public appearance to his disciples, see John xx. 19—30. and John says, ch. xxi. 1. " After these things," *i. e.* two

public appearances to his apostles, "he showed himself at the sea of Tiberias, or sea of Galilee." Now none of these two appearances mentioned John xx., can be what Paul finally mentions when he says, "then of all the apostles," for this we will afterwards notice, must refer to that final appearing when he led them out to Bethany, and ascended in their view; whereas, after the two appearances mentioned by John, he went to Galilee. "After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once." This is the most solemn appearance of all, recorded Matt. xxviii. 10. 16, 17. Jesus, it would appear, convened a general meeting of his disciples, and fixed a mountain in Galilee as the place. Galilee had been the place of Christ's education, and the scene in a particular manner of his public doctrine and miracles; there also, it would appear, his disciples were most numerous, for of five hundred brethren who saw him there together, only one hundred and twenty belonged to Jerusalem and the adjacent country. Now, while we believe that he appeared to above five hundred brethren at once, and see it recorded, that he convened the disciples in Jerusalem (who only amounted to about one hundred and twenty) to a mountain in Galilee, in which country he had many disciples, it is clear to a demonstration, that it was there the general meeting was held. It was upon this occasion, it would seem, that he had the meeting, recorded John xxi. with Peter, James, John, Thomas, Nathaniel and two others, the first four had gone to Galilee to meet with him. It is said, ver. 14. that this was the *third* time that Jesus appeared to his disciples, from which it is evident that it could not be after the general meeting, for in that case, it would have been the *fourth*, and it is most likely, that this is considered as one and the same appearance, with that

at the public meeting, and that Jesus had first appeared to these particular disciples, and continued with them till all the multitude was assembled, and saw him together. "After that he was seen of James;" this is not recorded by the Evangelists: "Then of all the apostles;" they had all repeatedly seen him before, but this is in distinction from being seen of *one* only before, *i. e.* James; this I conceive to be his last appearance, when he led them out to Bethany, and ascended in their view, recorded Luke xxiv. 44, &c. This is indeed joined with his first appearance by Luke, who gives only a short summary of what took place, without distinguishing between the different meetings, see also Acts i. 3—12.

Now, as we already noticed, this appearance, mentioned by Paul as after his appearing to the five hundred, and by Luke at the time of his ascension, can be none of those mentioned by John, for after both of these, he went to Galilee; these different appearances took up a period of forty days. "And last of all, he was seen of me also," &c. This is recorded, Acts ix. 3—8. That Jesus really appeared to him, is evident from ver. 17.

2d, We observe, that these witnesses are *credible* witnesses. Witnesses are credible if there are a sufficient number of them—if they agree in their testimony—if they had sufficient grounds of information—if they are not credulous, easily imposed upon, and therefore themselves deceived—and if there is no reason to suspect them of a concerted plan to impose upon others.

1. There was an abundant number of witnesses; besides twelve chosen to testify the fact to the world, above five hundred persons saw Christ alive from the grave.

2. They exactly agree in their testimony, and that in the face of every kind of disgrace and danger ; what has often been objected against the truth of their testimony, *viz.* that the circumstances concerning Christ's resurrection, are not related in the same order by all the evangelists, is in favour of their account. They were not solicitous to make a story hang together as impostors are. They indeed related nothing but truth, but they did not all relate the same incidents, nor in many cases were they very solicitous about the order of time ; but there is no difference between their accounts, and among them they make a complete history.

3. They had sufficient grounds of information. Jesus was with them at various times ; he did not merely appear for a moment and then vanish away, but he conversed with them familiarly, instructed them and comforted them ; they saw his side, his hands and his feet, he ate and drank with them, they touched and handled him, and finally saw him ascend, after he had been with them in all forty days.

4. They were by no means credulous, but on the contrary, unbelieving. Men are apt to be easily deceived by what they expect, and eagerly wish for ; but Christ's resurrection was no part of the creed of the apostles, till the evidence of its truth forced conviction, John xx. 9. No one would take the testimony of another, the whole of them disbelieved Mary and the other women, Mark xvi. 11. and even appear to have ridiculed their weakness, Luke xxiv. 10. 11. ; the disciples in general disbelieved the account given by the two disciples going to Emmaus, Mark xvi. 13., and though the apostles appear to have listened with more attention to the account of Peter, Luke xxiv. 34. yet neither did they give proper credit to it, for they were terrified and af-

frighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit, the first time he appeared, Luke xxiv. 37. and Jesus then upbraided them with their unbelief, Mark xvi. 14. Thomas would not believe the account of the whole of them, John xx. 24, &c.; and as they were unbelieving, the most unequivocal evidences were given them. They saw Christ's pierced side, his wounded hands and feet, they were desired to touch and handle him, he ate and drank before them repeatedly.

5. They cannot be suspected of a concerted plan to impose upon others, and that for the following reasons.

1. They were too *numerous, scattered and unlearned* for such an attempt. Impostures have ever been carried on by a few cunning men, closely connected and living together; but of the disciples, there were more than five hundred scattered through Judea, Samaria and Galilee, and not easily assembled together—ignorant for the most part and unlearned, and therefore unfit for cunning imposture, though good instruments for declaring the simple truth.

2. They were too narrowly watched by men most deeply interested to detect an imposture, if there was any, to have attempted, far less prevailed, in such a plan. It was ordained in order more fully to manifest the truth of Christ's resurrection, that his enemies were more mindful of his words than his friends were, Matt. xxvii. 62. and such precautions would have effectually disconcerted any human attempts, though they could not defeat the power of God; thus was the truth of Christ's resurrection more confirmed by the devices of his enemies, while they were obliged to fall upon the pitiful expedient, to make the guards say, that his disciples stole him away *while they slept*.

3. They could derive no advantage of any kind from

this imposture, but on the contrary were subjected to every species of loss and disgrace ; no worldly advantage, no pleasure, profit or fame, to reward them ; no spiritual pride nor honour could be gratified : they lost their goods, their ease, their lives, their good name and reputation in declaring their testimony, while the wise and foolish, learned and ignorant, high and low, religious and profane, were equally their enemies, and opposed to their report. See a summary of their sufferings, 1 Cor. iv. 9—14.—But suppose those who were acquainted with Jesus, too credulous, or their honour concerned to make good the truth of Christ's words, and go on with what was begun, what shall be said in these views to the last witness, *viz.* the persecuting Saul, who breathed out threatenings and slaughter against Christ's disciples, who was at the very time of his conversion employed by his friends in power to destroy that way, and whose interest, honour, conscience, and every thing which men hold valuable, were deeply interested to prove Jesus an impostor. Thus we find that the witnesses are credible—many in number—agreeing in testimony—well informed—by no means to be suspected of credulity—and as little of a plan to impose upon others.

3d, We observe, that God bore testimony to the faithfulness of the witnesses on the day of Pentecost, and afterwards. This was often promised, particularly Acts i. 8. ; we see the accomplishment, Acts ii. 1—21. 36. to end, iv. 23. to end. How shall all those things mentioned in these passages be accounted for on any other supposition but that Jesus was alive. We see these witnesses speaking with every tongue, we see them working miracles in the name of the risen Saviour, and with power and energy opening up the testimony of the

prophets, which formerly, when Jesus was with them, they did not understand.

Those men, who denied Jesus, who fled from him, we now behold with the utmost boldness, declaring the truth in the face of every danger. We see thousands of the Jews believing in Christ, when only a very few were converted during his personal ministry, and the most wonderful effects following, viz. *joy and hope, separation from the world to serve Christ in unity and love, giving up the world in every respect to look for his second coming.* We are certain that these effects did happen; the account of them was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, when thousands of Jews were alive, who were eye-witnesses of the facts, and were fully disposed to disprove this account if they could. These incidents have a manifest connection with the resurrection of Jesus Christ; for he foretold that they would follow his ascension. He declared that believers should *speak with tongues, &c.* Mark xvi. 17, 18. He foretold the *success of the gospel*, John xii. 32.; *the nature of his kingdom, in his confession to Pilate*; and *he prayed for that unity and love which took place among his disciples, and for their deliverance from the world*, John xvii. 15. 20, 21. This downpouring of the Holy Spirit is termed God's bearing witness, Heb. ii. 4. and this was the account of the apostles at the time, Acts v. 32.

4th, We observe, that the testimony of the apostles agreed with, and opened up the testimony of the prophets. The prophets with one voice held forth, first a suffering, and then an exalted and prosperous Messiah, and they also related many particular incidents of his life, death and resurrection. For example, that he would be betrayed by a friend, Psal. xli. 9.; his condemnation by Jews and Gentiles, Psal. ii. 1, 2.; the

manner of his death, Psal. xxii. 16. ; his words on the cross, Psal. xxii. 1. ; and those of his enemies, Psal. xxii. 7, 8. ; the parting his garments, and casting lots for his coat, Psal. xxii. 18. ; his being crucified with transgressors and saving one of them, Isa. liii. 12. ; none of his bones being broken, Psal. xxxiv. 20. ; but his side pierced, Zech. xii. 10. ; his being buried, and laid in a rich man's tomb, Isa. liii. 9. ; his rising again, Psal. xvi. 9. Isa. liii. 10. 12. and that on the third day ; for Paul says this is according to the Scriptures : besides the type of Jonah, I can only find one place that I can suppose Paul had in eye, viz. Hos. vi. 2. Without any application, we could have far more naturally supposed this passage ultimately to apply to Christ's resurrection, than we could have supposed Hos. xi. 1. to have applied to his coming out of Egypt ; and as Matt. ii. 25. marks the application of the one, so Paul's words appear to have a respect to the other. Many of the Jewish Rabbies applied it to the Messiah. Now all these things are to the point as to Christ's resurrection, for they are all spoken of him who was testified to be alive. They are all contained in that book which the Jews had in their hands, and acknowledged as the word of God while they fulfilled it. How absurd for free-thinkers to urge that they were written after their accomplishment. Christians have not been the only guardians of the Old Testament Scriptures ; but the dispersed Jews do still retain them handed down from their forefathers, and thus are in this respect, as well as others, evidences of the truth of Christianity.

II. Observe the glorious import of that fact, as it is good news to the guilty ; the character that it draws of God, and the line of conduct it points out to believers, manifest it to be the testimony of God.

We do not mean fully to prove the import, but only speak of this as an evidence of the fact. The import of that fact agrees with the testimony from the excellent glory, manifests the dignity of Christ's person, the sufficiency of his sacrifice, its acceptance in full of all demands; it brings life and immortality to light: how suitable a foundation of hope to the guilty! how glorious an object of hope to mortals!

The character it draws of Jehovah could only be revealed by himself, his glory is manifested as the just God and the Saviour; we naturally entertain some notions of God as just and holy, but we never are able to reconcile these perfections with the free and sovereign exercise of mercy, and therefore, in order to entertain hope, we are always solicitous either to exalt our own characters to God's law, or to bring down God's character to our's; but in the import of the resurrection of Jesus, we behold a God of inflexible justice, unsullied purity, and infinite grace and mercy; we see these seemingly jarring perfections conjoined by infinite wisdom, and displayed by infinite power, in the salvation of the guilty.

The line of conduct believers are called to, is quite contrary to the way of the world, and manifests the truth of Christ's resurrection. They are called to deny self-righteousness and worldly lusts — the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; no corner is left for human *worth*, *pride*, or sinful *gratifications*; the believer is called to follow the example of Jesus, to mark his footsteps, and at all hazards to lay hold on eternal life.

We may add one evidence more connected with the former, the most satisfactory and peculiar to believers, and that is, an experimental proof of Christ's re-

surrection; knowing him in the power thereof, while our experience agrees with the word of God, as to the guilty, lost and unhappy condition of men; experiencing Christ's resurrection as suited to give us peace of conscience, and to inspire us with the lively hope of eternal life: no man can reason a Christian out of the belief that Jesus is above, while he feels the power of a risen Saviour.

III. Consider the ends and designs of his resurrection.

1. Christ rose to receive a suitable reward for his obedience to the death, Isa. liii. 10. 12. Philip. ii. 5—12. And as he died for the guilt of others, so he rose to this inheritance as a public person, 1 Pet. i. 3, 4. 21.

2. Christ rose to manifest that the work that justifies the ungodly is finished, and that in him there is eternal life: this we considered already when we treated of the import of his resurrection; this is set forth, Isa. xlix. 8. 2 Cor. vi. 2. Christ as raised was given for a covenant to the people; he was manifested as the surety of the new covenant made in his blood, insuring all the blessings thereof to the guilty through the merits of that blood, the value of which was demonstrated when "the God of peace brought from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the everlasting covenant," Heb. xiii. 20.

3. He rose to set aside the types and shadows, and bring in the spirit and substance of them.

1. He set aside the worldly relation to God in which the nation of Israel stood, when he, the true seed of David, sat down upon his throne. The first was only a figure and shadow of the last, as we may see set forth at large in the epistle to the Hebrews. In his resurrection and ascension he shook the earth, even in setting

aside that which he formerly established in the same way, Heb. xii. 26, 27. He made a notable alteration upon his kingdom on earth, removing the worldly establishment of Israel, and introducing in room thereof, an unmoveable kingdom, ver. 28. The nature of which he declares to Pilate, and contrasts it with the other, John xviii. 36, 37.

2. His ascension into heaven made a remarkable alteration ; there he shook not the earth only, as at Sinai, but also heaven, when he sat down on the throne of David to order and establish it for ever. The saints who died under the first covenant, in the faith of the promise made to Abraham, had not received its accomplishment, Heb. xi. 39, 40. their sins were passed by in the forbearance of God, in the view of an after propitiation, Rom. iii. 25. and which was afterwards made for the redemption of their transgressions, Heb. ix. 15. consequently they were, though in a state of rest, represented in the New Testament by being in Abraham's bosom, only expectants of that eternal inheritance which Christ was to receive as the reward of his humiliation, and of the blessings of which his redeemed were to be partakers. When he sat down as the Priest upon his throne, to reign upon Mount Zion and before his ancients gloriously, then the spirits of just men made perfect through him, were incorporated with the angels into one grand worshipping assembly, which was the anti-type of the church of Israel, Heb. xii. 22—25. See the solemnity of his inauguration, Rev. v. 6, &c.

4. He rose for the salvation and deliverance of all for whom he gave his life a ransom, Isa. xlix. 8—11.

1. He opens the eyes of sinners, bringing them to the knowledge of the truth, and thus draws them to himself, Psal. cx. 1—4. John xii. 32, xvi. 8, &c.

2. He comforts and rejoices the hearts of his people, and fits them for enduring affliction, by sending down his Holy Spirit, John xiv. 25—28. xv. 26. xvi. 7. 13. and thus the apostles accounted for the wonderful effects on the day of Pentecost, Acts ii. 33.

3. He protects them from the power and policy of their enemies, both by setting proper bounds to their trials, 1 Cor. x. 13. for he is the Governor among the nations, and rules triumphant in the midst of his enemies; and also by giving them strength to endure temptation, 2 Cor. xii. 9. Rev. iii. 10. and thus in the context he is set forth as walking in the midst of his churches to protect and defend them.

4. He has ascended as our great High Priest, to plead the value of his blood. He appears in heaven as the Lamb who was slain. This is most suitable to our guilty circumstances, and it is thus set forth for our encouragement, Heb. vii. 24, 25. ix. 24. 1 John ii. 1.

5. He receives their souls at death. Thus in our text, he is said to have the keys of death; thus we see his answer to the thief on the cross, Luke xxiii. 42, 43. Acts vii. 59. the dead in the Lord enter into a state of immediate happiness with Jesus, Philip. i. 23. Rev. vii. 15. &c.

6. He raises them from the dead at the resurrection of the just, John v. 28, 29. John vi. 39, 40. Philip. iii. 20, 21. This in John v. 21, 22. is connected with Christ being appointed the judge, of which assurance is given by his resurrection. Thus he has the keys of the *grave*, as the word *hades* should be rendered, for in all the New Testament there is but one passage, where there is the smallest appearance of it signifying the

place of torment ; besides, Christ does not deliver from this those who are condemned to it.

7. He is the happiness and joy of his people for ever ; *He is alive unto ages of ages*. We have seen that at death he receives their souls into paradise, and he raises them at the resurrection of life ; then they reign with him upon the earth, according to the song of the redeemed, Rev. v. 10. “ And has made us unto our God, kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth ;” they are accepted at the general judgment, and live forever with him in the new Jerusalem, where the Lamb that was slain shall constitute their happiness forever, Rev. xxi. 3, 4. xxii. 3, 4, 5.

5. Christ rose for the destruction of his enemies, Psal. ii. 5. 9., &c. cx. 5, 6. Soon after his resurrection he gave commission to destroy Jerusalem by the Roman sword, a notable type of the last desolation, and this as the punishment for rejecting the Messiah, Luke xix. 41—45. This would appear to be what is spoken of as accomplished at the opening of the sixth seal, Rev. vi. 12., &c., which cannot mean the destruction of the world, and is set forth in language precisely similar to what Christ uses in the gospels, when speaking of his work of judgment on the Jewish nation. Christ is also set forth as gradually by the Spirit of his mouth, consuming that power which peculiarly opposes itself to his dominion, viz. the man of sin, and at last, when he comes, he shall give him a memorable overthrow, even before the general judgment, and perdition of ungodly men ; we have an account of this in Rev. xix. 19., &c.

Lastly, his judgments shall appear in the final ruin of the tribes of hell, and the nations of the ungodly, Rev. xx. 7. to the end.

By way of improvement, we may observe in general, that the whole of Christ's religion derives its certainty from Christ's resurrection ; if we are established in this, we will be so in every thing else.

1. If Christ was raised, then he is indeed God, manifest in the flesh, who died for the guilty. God the Father is well pleased in him, salvation is assured to the believer.

2. If Christ was raised, then indeed he is the king of Israel, and all the institutions of his kingdom divine. Then will we see baptism, separation from the world, and the ordinances, not as the peculiarities of a party, but as the public ordinances of the kingdom of heaven ; then will we be careful of our steps in the house of God.

3. If Christ be raised, and the wonderful effects that followed be evidences thereof, *i. e.* his people being gathered from the world, joined together in love and unity, and observing his ordinances as his willing people in Christ's name ; then the opposite of these, which national Christianity is, even that power which scatters the power of the holy people, is Antichrist founded on a lie, in opposition to the truth, and intended by the dragon who influences the grand apostasy, to manifest, if possible, that Christ is not raised—is not come in the flesh, even as the ancient separation, unity and obedience of the disciples, manifested to the world, and carried convincing proof of Christ's mission and resurrection.

4. If the unity, love, and obedience of the disciples, constitute part of the proof of Christ's mission and resurrection, and these are the means of converting sinners, Oh ! brethren, how powerful a motive ought this to be, to induce us to these.

5. Christ's resurrection is the assurance to all men, that he is appointed the Judge: let this influence us; He will soon come again.

6. Let all consider, that if Christ's resurrection be true, as we have proved it to be, and the glorious import thereof consequently established, that Christ is the only way of salvation to the guilty, that salvation is ascertained to the believer, while the rejecter shall surely perish, and that soon Christ shall judge the world in righteousness.

H Y M N S.

On the Employment of the Saints on the Lord's Day.

WELCOME to us this sacred day
Which brings remembrance of our Lord;
To him we'll highest homage pay,
And hear his sweet reviving word.

We'll joyful round his table sit,
And there record redeeming love,
Which sav'd us from the lowest pit,
And rais'd our hopes to life above.

What though affliction's keenest smart
May often cause us to bewail,
And oft temptation's piercing dart
Our feeble souls may here assail:

We'll mourn in hope, and hail him nigh,
Who comes to save from ev'ry foe;
With joy we'll meet him in the sky,
And see an end of all our woe.

[On Lord's day, August 9. 1801, Mr INGLIS, after delivering a discourse on 2 Cor. v. 9, 10. mentioned, that not having been able to find in the Hymn Book, a Hymn entirely suited to his subject, he had composed the following lines, which were sung by the congregation, and are now inserted in the Supplement to the Hymn Book.]

The Christian's Request and Hope of Glory.

OPPRESS'D with sorrow, sin, and fears,
Most gracious God ! to thee we cry ;
Console our hearts, and dry our tears,
To Jesus may we live and die.

O may we keep thy holy faith,
Stedfast maintain the hope of rest ;
Attend to all our Saviour saith,
And know that such are truly bless'd.

Happy below, but yet more bless'd,
When Christ awards the gen'ral doom,
And saints, by their great Lord confess'd,
Are wafted to their heav'nly home.



VERSES,

*Written by a Friend, on reading, after Mr INGLIS's
Death, the above Hymn.*

THE Saint who these sweet lines compos'd
Now sings in more exalted strains ;
Holding the faith, his eyes he clos'd,
And now in endless glory reigns.

No more oppress'd with sin and fears,
His gracious God has heard his cry ;
Consol'd his heart, and dry'd his tears,
In mansions with himself on high.

During his pilgrimage below,
The gospel pure he did proclaim
To sinners sunk in guilt and woe ;
The *Cross of Christ* was all his theme.

The church of God he fed with care,
Taught all his blessed Lord's commands,
And those in need did richly share
The bounty of his liberal hands.

Let us his faithful steps pursue,
And imitate his zeal and love ;
Hold fast the faith of Jesus too,
That we may reign with him above.

When Jesus comes the dead to raise,
Then shall we see his face again ;
And join with him in endless praise
Unto the Lamb who once was slain.

THE END.

*Printed by J. Ritchie,
Edinburgh.*



UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



44 898 393

1- 3909

TBX 6217 .I52	14129 Ingles Letters, sermons & tracts
DEC 7	1954 ILL - North JAN 20 1955
	1- 3909

BX 6217 14129
.I52

SWIFT HALL LIBRARY

1- 3909

UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO



44

898

393

